

Periodical



COLLEGE ENGLISH

LIBRARY
APR 1945

APRIL • 1945

COLLEGE ENGLISH

AN OFFICIAL ORGAN of the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

W. WILBUR HATFIELD, *Editor*

LaTOURETTE STOCKWELL, *Assistant Editor*

ADVISERS

ELECTED BY THE SUBSCRIBERS

ERNEST BERNBAUM, University of Illinois	KEMP MALONE, Johns Hopkins University
OSCAR JAMES CAMPBELL, Columbia University	MARJORIE NICOLSON, Columbia University
GEORGE R. COFFMAN, University of North Carolina	LOUISE POUND, University of Nebraska
HARDIN CRAIG, University of North Carolina	GEORGE F. REYNOLDS, University of Colorado
NORMAN FOERSTER, University of Iowa	WINFIELD H. ROGERS, Woman's College, University of North Carolina
CHARLES C. FRIES, University of Michigan	LOUISE M. ROSENBLATT, Brooklyn College
JAMES H. HANFORD, Western Reserve University	CLARENCE D. THORPE, University of Michigan
ERNEST C. HASSOLD, University of Louisville	HELEN C. WHITE, University of Wisconsin
FRED W. LORCH, Iowa State College	

<i>Vol. 6</i>	CONTENTS FOR APRIL 1945	<i>No. 7</i>
LAUGHTER IN WARTIME AMERICA	<i>Walter Blair</i>	361
COMMUNITY OF IDEAS AMONG THE GREAT FAITHS THROUGH THE AGES	<i>Herman Hailperin</i>	368
TIME AND THE HUMANITIES	<i>Tremaine McDowell</i>	375
ENGLISH STUDIES IN THE POSTWAR WORLD	<i>E. K. Brown</i>	380
THE "BOOK-OF-READINGS" PROBLEM	<i>Louise E. Rorabacher</i>	392
THE SCIENCE OF MAN	<i>Joseph E. Baker</i>	395
THE HUMANITIES IN ENGINEERING COLLEGES	<i>Boyd Guest</i>	402
REFLECTIONS ON "HAMLET"— <i>Poem</i>	<i>George Brandon Saul</i>	403
RECONSTRUCTION FOR HUMPTY DUMPTY: THE COMPARATIVE CONCEPT IN LITERARY STUDY	<i>Harold R. Walley</i>	404
THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM STUDY		409
N.C.T.E. COLLEGE SECTION ELECTION		410
ROUND TABLE		
The Technique of the Round Table in College Composition	<i>Jerome H. Buckley and Paul L. Wiley</i>	411
After School	<i>Louis Ginsberg</i>	412
SUMMARY AND REPORT		413
BOOKS		
Shakespeare and the Actors	<i>La Tourette Stockwell</i>	415
Satire in Shakespeare	<i>Helen C. White</i>	416
The Shape of Books To Come	<i>Robert E. Spiller</i>	417
A Respected Text Revised	<i>Laurence B. Goodrich</i>	418
In Brief Review		419

College English is published monthly from October to May at the University of Chicago Press, 5750 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Subscription price, \$3.00 per year, single copies, 40 cents; in Canada, \$3.35; in other countries in the Postal Union, \$3.60. *College English* and the *English Journal*, to one address, \$4.50; in Canada, \$5.20; in other countries in the Postal Union, \$5.70.

Correspondence from libraries, agents, and dealers should be addressed to the University of Chicago Press. All other communications should be addressed to *College English*, 211 West Sixty-eighth Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Entered as second-class matter September 26, 1939, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

[PRINTED IN THE U.S.A. BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS]

Coming...

a balanced collection of old and new expository selections, with intensive and extensive questions and a correlated manual on how to read . . . for the freshman course . . .

by Walter Blair, University of Chicago, and
John C. Gerber, State University of Iowa

SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY

Chicago

Atlanta

Dallas

New York

Your Seniors Majoring in English

will probably teach in high schools next year. Junior memberships in N.C.T.E.—including subscriptions to the *English Journal*, the professional magazine for high-school teachers of English—are open to them now with reduced dues. Introduce them to this source of inspiration and practical help.

Let us send you information.

∴

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

211 West Sixty-eighth Street, Chicago

—an omnibus with
a purpose



—to teach students to
read, understand, evaluate

EFFECTIVE READING

Methods and Models

M. L. ROSENTHAL • W. C. HUMMEL • V. E. LEICHTY

Michigan State College

EFFECTIVE READING includes the kinds of writing which are important to the student and *Effective Reading* teaches him how to read, understand, and evaluate them.

THE SELECTIONS represent excellent writing from books, magazines, and journals; important pieces of exhortation, written and spoken; essays and short stories and plays and poems. These models offer a systematic approach to various types of reading: narrative, explanatory writing, logic and argument, scientific writing, belles-lettres.

READING TECHNIQUES are outlined in an introductory chapter and in the discussion of methods which accompanies each section of models. The student is *told* how to read for meaning; he is *shown* how to read for meaning; he is given ample opportunity to *practice* reading for meaning. \$3.00

Let us send you a full description of this book

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

Boston

New York

Chicago

Dallas

Atlanta

San Francisco

Modern Grammar



Important Revisions

MODERN GRAMMAR AT WORK

WATTS

A practical guide to language usage in accord with the changing standards of America today. The book presents a challenge and an invitation to the students using it to gain an insight into language as an instrument of communication and to learn to use that instrument constructively in their own lives.

\$2.00

FRESHMAN PROSE ANNUAL: NUMBER FOUR

GAY • BOATRIGHT • WYKOFF

The selections in this fourth number of the widely-used *Freshman Prose Annual* deal with topics of current interest. The first four major divisions of the book are as in previous issues. The fifth section deals with reading and literature, including readings on problems of thinking, problems of criticism, and problems of critical appraisal.

CORRECTNESS AND PRECISION IN WRITING:

FORM C

GRANT • BRACHER • DUFF

CORRECTNESS AND PRECISION IN WRITING has gained an enviable place in the esteem of college teachers for its direct, down-to-earth treatment of grammar and usage. Form C continues the successful plan of the series, but includes new exercises, new tests, and new selections for summary writing.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

Boston

New York

Chicago

Dallas

Atlanta

San Francisco

MASTERS *of the* SHORT STORY

edited by

WALTER HAVIGHURST

\$1.75 list

*Conrad
Galsworthy
Saki
Maugham
Coppard
Forster
Joyce
Woolf
Lawrence
Mansfield
Benson
Huxley
Wharton
Anderson
Lardner
Aiken
Steele
Porter
Faulkner
Benét
Hemingway
Steinbeck
Saroyan
Welty*

- Twenty-four stories by the twenty-four American and British writers who have contributed most conspicuously to the form and perceptiveness of the modern short story.
- The collection features the most memorable story by each of these authors, chosen after a careful re-reading of *all* the stories of every writer represented.
- For your course next term in Freshman English....the Short Story.... Contemporary Literature.

To Be Published April 3rd.

HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY

New York 17

COLLEGE ENGLISH

Volume 6

APRIL 1945

Number 7

Laughter in Wartime America

WALTER BLAIR¹

OLD jokes, of course, never die. They may become worn out, tired, even anemic; but they never pass away.

Such was the sombre reflection of Mark Twain's Connecticut Yankee when, in 1889, after being miraculously transported to King Arthur's Court, he listened to the jokes of the court jester. He wrote:

It seemed peculiarly sad to sit here, thirteen hundred years before I was born, and listen again to poor, flat, worm-eaten jokes that had given me the dry gripes when I was a boy thirteen hundred years afterward. It about convinced me that there isn't any such thing as a new joke possible. Everybody laughed at these antiquities—but then they always do. . . .

Today the bewhiskered quality of much American humor is publicly recognized each year by a number of our leading professional laughsmiths when they banquet in New York to celebrate the birthday of Joe Miller. *Joe Miller's Jests*, they admit on each such occasion, though it was published away back in 1739, is still a gold mine for them. "We have been doing very well," boasts Comedian "Senator" Ford, "reroasting Joe Miller's chestnuts." And at other

times of the year, comedians pay tribute to their patron saint by calling their jests "joe millers."

Since a large share of our jokes are thus perennial, almost every type of humor is available to convulse at least some lovers of laughter in practically every period. Paul Bunyan tall-tale humor, for instance, is being perpetuated today by comic-strip Superman and by radio's Fibber McGee; the strain of crackerbox humor which won fame for Ben Franklin in distant Colonial times is continued by such diverse characters as Orphan Annie and Ogden Nash; and even polished verse like that typical of the Restoration period has modern practitioners in Leonard Bacon and F. P. A.

But though practically all types of humor continue brazenly to outlive the centuries, each period—in America, at least—is likely to have its favorite humorous motifs, its own particular patterns. These, for one reason or another (and the reason often is very hard to learn), will have a strong appeal to the audiences of the day. It may be worth while to examine a few such themes prevalent in our modern wartime humor and to speculate about their significance.

Three types of American humor con-

¹ Professor of English, University of Chicago; author of *Native American Humor*, *Horse Sense in American Humor*, and *Tall Tale America*.

tinuously successful in recent years have been the Humor of the Irresponsibles, the Humor of the Rugged Individualists, and the Humor of the Poor Little Men.

A cartoon by Paul Webb published in *Esquire*, in February, 1945, admirably represents the first of these types. A huge bear, looking rather peevish, is stalking through the snow up to the front door of a disintegrating frame house in the Southern mountains. In his arms he carries an old man who is bewhiskered, bepatched, barefoot—and extraordinarily sound asleep. Other bears trail behind, glaring murderously at the slumberous gaffer. From behind a tree peer the old man's sons, all of them unkempt and bedraggled mountaineers. According to the caption, they are saying, "Looks like they ketched Paw a tryin' to hibernate in their winter hide-out ag'in."

Webb's humor, typified by this and a whole series of cartoons, exploits the irresponsible shiftlessness of the mountaineers. Forever, in his pictures, they sleep or rest in their ragged clothes, with a moonshine jug beside them. The comic point of every caption is that they are prodigiously ignorant, dirty, or lazy.

Humor of this type—that of the Irresponsibles—has been presented in a number of forms and locales in recent years. Mountaineer and hillbilly cartoons, oral tales, and fiction have placed such humor against the background of both Kentucky and Tennessee. It is a mainstay of the "Li'l Abner" comic strip. Erskine Caldwell's stories and novels of poor-white sharecroppers have also made use of it, sometimes, at least, humorously. Nor has it been located in the South alone. Sketches in the *New Yorker* and plays—very popular ones—such as *You Can't Take It with You* and *Harvey*, have given it a metropolitan backdrop. John Steinbeck has given it a California set-

ting in *Tortilla Flat* and in his latest novel, *Cannery Row*. Two Russian-born authors recently entertained Americans with it in *Anything Can Happen*.

One of the most popular books exploiting such humor in recent years was Jesse Stuart's *Taps for Private Tussie*, a best-selling Book-of-the-Month Club selection in 1943. This earthy novel unfolds the escapades of a family of Southern poor whites who, following the news of the demise of Private Tussie, collect ten thousand dollars in government insurance. The group is five in number when they move into the best mansion in town, but when relatives get the news of the family affluence, this number soon increases to approximately four dozen. There are many comic happenings which display the improvidence, the squalor, and the earthy amorality characteristic of these folk, and at the end of the novel the money has all been spent and the house has been completely wrecked.

Wrecking property seems to be one of the favorite pastimes of the Irresponsibles. One recalls the maltreated Ford car, for instance, in *Tobacco Road*. Or consider *Cannery Row*. This is a rather aimless narrative, but what plot continuity it has is concerned with the two parties which the nondescript loafers of the Row plan for their friend, Doc. The first party gets started before Doc returns from a trip, and by the time he returns, all the liquor has been consumed, an expensive phonograph has been broken, and Doc's place is a shambles. The second party is rather similar, but since Doc is on hand to help his hosts drink the liquor, tear up the place, and stage a roughhouse, it is considered a tremendous success.

The formula for such humor is fairly well indicated by these summaries. Whether they inhabit McSorley's Won-

derful Saloon or Cannery Row, a share-cropper's hovel or an ancient mansion in Brooklyn, the characters involved in the Humor of the Irresponsibles live their shiftless lives with animal simplicity, enjoying themselves with no thought of law or order, despoiling a saloon, an automobile, or a house every now and then just to show that they don't care a hang whether school keeps or lets out.

The Humor of the Rugged Individualists, which, as will be seen, has affiliations with the first type, often deals with the past and frequently takes the form of childhood reminiscences. The characters are usually members of a relatively respectable class, but a number of them are likely to be kinsprits of the Irresponsibles. They may be relatively respectable, as Irresponsibles go, but they will have the same tendencies—tendencies to be shiftless, unsystematic, amoral. In their midst, however, will be an old-fashioned Rugged Individualist, "sot" in his ways, sure of himself and his standards, and eager to see people conform to them. If such a character lives today, he is considered stuffy or at best old-fashioned. When, however, he is seen in the costumed past, he is quaint and amusing. *

Clarence Day's *Life with Father*, extremely popular as a book and phenomenally successful as a long-lived play, is an outstanding example. The Day boys are adolescent Irresponsibles; Mother Day, genteel though she is, with her disregard for truth and money, her amoral connivings to get her gentle way, is a grown-up one. Surrounded by such a group, irascible and stern Father Day fights valiantly, though vainly, to retain his self-respect and the morals of his family.

Other family records—half-fictional, half-autobiographical—of a similar sort

include Rosemary Taylor's *Chicken Every Sunday*, which eventually did very well as a play; Kathryn Forbes' *Mamma's Bank Account* (later dramatized as *I Remember Mamma*); and Eva Bruce's *Call Her Rosie*. Sketches in the same vein have dotted the pages of the *New Yorker* and other magazines ever since Day set the pattern.

The pattern serves for humorous creations on every level from the lowest to the highest. On a low level it appears in some sequences of the comic strip "Abbie an' Slat." In such sequences, respectable Aunt Abbie and Daughter Becky Groggins try in vain to reform ignorant, lazy, whisky-drinking, amoral old Bathless Groggins. Another comic strip which uses it is "Bringing Up Father," which shows Maggie and her daughter trying to reform Jiggs.

The pattern is elevated to a somewhat higher level in the play *Chicken Every Sunday*. Here Mrs. Blachman, descendant of an old Southern family, is a housewife who runs a boarding-house to support her visionary husband and their offspring. The husband's operation of the traction line, the bank, and the laundry in Tucson is woefully inefficient; and the boarders, some of whom he brings home, are a strange crowd of Irresponsibles—a strumpet, an old woman who yodels when drunk, a vulgar old miner, a rich Bostonian dude, and others. In the midst of all the turmoil Mrs. Blachman is lonely but brave-hearted.

On the highest level, quite possibly John P. Marquand's two most humorous books—*The Late George Apley* and *H. M. Pulham, Esq.*—owe their remarkable appeal, in part at least, to their using a very similar pattern. In each, a somewhat stuffy leading character who subscribes to time-hallowed New England standards battles against those who would de-

part from them. The quaintness of these standards, their inapplicability to changing ways of life, provide laughable situations.

The Humor of the Poor Little Men, however, is probably the most prevalent of all in modern times. Sergeant Baker's "Sad Sack" comic strip, beloved by readers in the Army, shows the inept and dull-minded little private with the big nose baffled by one situation after another in his unmilitary military career—at one time by the bossiness of a sergeant or an officer, at another by the trials of kitchen police, at still another by the medical men, with their medicines and serums. "Casper Milquetoast" is a civilian cartoon series with a similar formula.

The frustrated bungler is also very popular as a radio type. Fibber McGee and Frank Morgan lie valiantly to build up their ego, only to have their lies exposed as such in a spectacular fashion. Jack Benny poses as a paragon, only to have his stinginess, his ineptitude, his stupidity exposed by his girl-friend, his bandleader, his singer, his announcer, or his Negro butler. Bob Hope, another leader in popularity polls, also uses the Poor Little Man motif consistently. When he does not get laughs by wise-cracking, Hope gets them by employing a simple formula: In Part I he tries to establish the fact that he is a hero, a brilliant thinker, or a lady-killer. In Part II—probably after one of his magnificently timed pauses—he is shown to be a coward, a chump, or an ineffectual flirt. His is the comedy of the bluffer who is exposed.

When Hope turned author in 1944 to write, in *I Never Left Home*, of his adventures while entertaining soldiers, a number of humorous passages conformed to the pattern. The title of chapter i conformed to it, for instance, when it began

with "Hope Springs Eternal" and then concluded, significantly, "For Cover." And the account was only two pages along when he told of winning the respect of a soldier from Texas, over in Bizerte. "After that," he continued, "Tex kind of softened up, and there was the usual formality about my autograph. But I finally made him take it."

In the more sophisticated reaches of contemporary humor, continuous frustrations are likely to make the Poor Little Man a mite neurotic—perhaps even to afflict him with a touch of dementia praecox. Robert Benchley, both in the movies and in his writings (in the character he portrays, of course) is an example. "He sees himself," points out J. Bryant III, "not the master of high comedy, but the victim of low tragedy. King Lear loses a throne; Benchley loses a filling; Romeo breaks his heart; Benchley breaks his shoelace. They are annihilated; he is humiliated. And to his humiliations there is no end."

After a time, naturally, such humiliation is likely to make a man edgy, as Benchley's sketches show. These are full of records of frustrations and consequent maladjustments. He tells, for example, how his inferiority complex causes him to let a salesman bully him into buying not the three-dollar shirt he wants but an eighteen-dollar number, how his fear of ridicule prevents his wearing a white suit or exercising with a rowing machine, how a phobia inspired by pigeons drives him to a frenzy. And so on, ad infinitum—all of it, somehow, quite funny.

Benchley, in a Preface to a book by S. J. Perelman, called himself and others workers in "the dementia praecox field." "Perelman," he said, generously, "did to our weak little efforts at 'crazy stuff' what Benny Goodman has done to middle-

period jazz. He swung it." But Perelman was closely followed, one supposes, by E. B. White and other *New Yorker* humorists, who operate in pretty much the same amusing way. Probably the most popular of all such authors is James Thurber, whose omnibus volume, *Thurber Carnival*, was a Book-of-the-Month Club choice in February of this year.

Such are the three patterns which, it seems to me, are most recurrent in contemporary American humor. There may be others which I have missed. There are several notable humorists, of course, who conform to none of them—Mauldin, the Army cartoonist, for example, and the incomparable Ludwig Bemelmans. It seems clear, nevertheless, that the Humor of the Irresponsible, the Humor of the Rugged Individualists, and the Humor of the Poor Little Men are captivating formulas—that there must be something in each of them which makes it, if properly handled, particularly amusing to Americans today.

It is illuminating to place this humor of the World War II period alongside of humor which flourished in our country during previous wartimes.

In 1836, for instance, when the Texans were battling the Mexicans, a character in some ways comparable to the Irresponsible of today was a comic hero, soon to be transformed into a serious one by his heroic death at the Alamo. This was Davy Crockett of Tennessee, who had been reared in a ramshackle log cabin, who had eluded education, who was crude, often vulgar, in his ways. Today, with such a background, Davy would be well outfitted to join the Irresponsible and to while away days and nights with them, lazing around and enjoying himself. But Davy, far from being a Jeeter Lester, was a tall-tale hero; and stories about him told not how little he

did but how much he did—told how, when he went to Congress, he ran the country; how, when he went hunting, he killed his cords of bear; how, when a rampaging comet threatened to destroy America, Davy climbed a high mountain and wrestled it to a standstill. In 1836, apparently, stories of such prodigious achievements were laughable patterns for humor.

In the middle forties, when the United States tangled with Mexico, a leading comic character—typical of the times—was Hosea Biglow, created by James Russell Lowell. Hosea, in several ways, was like one of the Rugged Individualists of contemporary humor. Like them, he was determined to have his own way; he had a respectable and time-hallowed code to live by, and he resolutely tried to live by it. However, Hosea was not surrounded by improvident zanies who tried to avoid his guidance and who made his efforts ridiculous. Instead, he was surrounded by like-minded men and women who agreed with his preachments and followed them, since they knew that he had acquired his wisdom in the best possible way—by using good horse sense. He was thus comparable to the peerless Mr. Dooley, destined to preach to a similarly respectful, though amused, public during the Spanish-American War—Mr. Dooley, "the Sage of Archey Road," another purveyor of common-sense philosophical wisdom. In 1846 and 1898, it appears, such characters conformed to the American idea of what was funny.

In the eighteen-sixties, when the North and the South were fighting the Civil War, two humorous figures—one a favorite in each section—were pre-eminent. Petroleum V. Nasby, created by David Ross Locke, was the comic idol of the North, while Bill Arp, created by Charles H. Smith, was admired and

loved by the South. These characters, in some respects, were not unlike our Sad Sacks, our Bob Hopes, our Robert Benchleys—our Poor Little Men. They, too, suffered from phobias; they, too, were bluffers; they, too, were afflicted with illogic. In other respects, though, these Civil War funny men were like unto the modern Irresponsibles. They were lazy and improvident; they were devoid of morality; and Nasby, at least, could think of no happier career than one which involved endless loafing, accompanied by constant application to a jug of kill-devil whisky.

But as soon as one considers what made for the humorous appeal of Arp and Nasby back there about eighty years ago, one notices that they differed greatly from either group of their modern prototypes. For whereas the characterizations of the Irresponsibles and the Poor Little Men, today, are intended to make them sympathetic and comically representative, the characterizations of Nasby and Arp were intended to make them unsympathetic and unrepresentative. Nasby and Arp, in other words, were the opposites of sympathetic and normal men such as Biglow and Dooley: the Civil War zanies were dimwits, always in the wrong, so that readers were sure that their opinions on any important question would be so wrong as to be hilariously funny. Southerners chuckled at Arp's support of the North, for instance, while Northerners laughed at Nasby's Copperhead sympathies.

At least some creators of today's Irresponsibles underline the fact that they consider their characters wise *because* they are Irresponsibles. Steinbeck, in his Preface to *Cannery Row*, notes that his characters are the scum of the earth—fallen women, procurers, rascals—and that they are also “saints and angels and

martyrs and holy men.” The whole tone of the book is such as to imply that there is a cause-effect relationship between these assertions. Practically the same concept, it may be recalled, is brought out explicitly in several speeches in *You Can't Take It with You*. There, as in some other humor of the same class, the Irresponsibles are given an opportunity to give tongue lashings to the stuffy folk with moral codes, standards, and ambitions.

Similarly, at least some of the creators of Poor Little Men imply that their characters, instead of being unlike the general run of humanity, are pretty typical. When, for instance, Thurber unfolded his own sincere philosophy not long ago, his description of man sounded extraordinarily like an explanation of the frustrated strivings of Poor Little Men. He wrote:

In giving up instinct and going in for reasoning, man has aspired higher than the attainment of natural goals; he has developed ideas and notions; he has monkeyed around with concepts. The life to which he naturally adapted he has put behind him; in moving into the alien and complicated sphere of Thought and Imagination he has become the least well-adjusted of all the creatures of the earth, and hence the most bewildered.

Convincing evidence might easily be cited to show that others in addition to Thurber believe that Poor Little Men are laughably representative of mankind.

These facts suggest that a chief difference, perhaps, between old wartime humor and modern wartime humor is that the earlier humor was more clearly in harmony with widely accepted and socially approved standards. Davy Crockett, in his exaggerated way, was shown achieving goals which were, to be sure, fantastic but which, by general agreement, were worthy. Today's humor shows no such achievements by its char-

acters. And laughter not only at Biglow and Dooley but also at Nasby and Arp was possible because Americans could discover congruity or incongruity with widely accepted standards of virtue and truth and with the sure pathway to wisdom. Today, a failure to achieve, shiftlessness, a lack of certainty, even amorality, are portrayed as admirable or at least normal.

To put the matter in another way, the older humor was affirmative; the modern humor is negative. The older humor asserted current values; the modern humor playfully attacks them.

Thus, so far at least, our humor today seems to lag behind current non-humorous writings. For though they differ—at times bitterly—about many matters, such diverse critics as Van Wyck Brooks, Alfred Kazin, Maxwell Geismar, Bernard DeVoto, Archibald MacLeish, and J. Donald Adams seem to agree, at least, that the trend both in fiction and in poetry has been in recent times—and will be in future—in the the direction of affirmations.

There is a significant point about this trend, however, so far as humor is concerned. The word is in the plural, not the singular—affirmations, not affirmation. For when novelists and poets, these days, speak out, their formulas for a better

world vary greatly. They do not have to depend, therefore, as humorists do, upon widespread agreements concerning standards, values, properties. In fact, the serious writers (and they are terribly serious as a rule) realize that their task is to persuade dubious readers to accept their prognoses and their prescriptions.

The only attitude that all these affirmative writers share is thus one of doubt—doubt concerning the validity of old values, old standards. Understandably, this is also the only attitude which is held by the general public: they, too, agree in seeing faults, although they, too, disagree about remedies. The only possible course for modern humorists, therefore, is to shape their comedy so as to exploit incongruities inherent in this one widely shared attitude. Only when, some time in the future, their general audience shares common tenets of belief, such as those of past wartimes, will modern humorists be able, in the words of a current song, to "accentuate the positive" and "latch onto the affirmative." Until such a time we shall doubtless continue to laugh hilariously at the Humor of the Irresponsibles, the Humor of the Rugged Individualists, and the Humor of the Poor Little Men—and to cherish the rather healthy skepticism which they embody.

Community of Ideas among the Great Faiths through the Ages¹

HERMAN HAILPERIN²

THE wording of the subject was given to me by your president. I am grateful to her for every word in the title. The language is well chosen for sustaining the thesis which I shall present this afternoon.

I like the phrase "through the ages." This means, it seems to me, that, though we are concerned with a discipline of human culture which has its origins in antiquity, we are, by no means, to think of the great religions as having had their formulation in an antiquity so hoary as to make those formulations unreal and beyond the natural grasp of contemporary men. Jesus and Paul lived about two thousand years ago. That's not so long ago, after all. How many here have seen people one hundred years old? Just multiply that by twenty—and you are back to the age of Jesus, and Hillel, and Rabban Gamaliel! Or think of the "space in time" that separates a man from his grandfather. Multiply that about twenty times—and again you are back to the days of the Apostles, and of Paul, and of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem!

And now a word about the first phrase—"community of ideas"—a fine phrase. English teachers ought, of course, to know their phrases! Yet it would not be amiss for English teachers to reveal some

inaccuracy in a field outside their own, especially in a detail of historical science where many history teachers have failed profoundly. I am happy that your topic does not speak of "influence"—a very elusive idea and always a serious obstruction in the way of viewing historical events in their true perspective. If I may employ a farfetched though, I hope, pointed illustration: Could a Hottentot present at this gathering be *influenced* by anything that might be said here today? We cannot have "influence" in human thought unless there is a background of historical intellectual relations and contacts. So your topic speaks accurately when it talks of "community of ideas" among the great faiths, not "influence." "Community" implies common ownership; it carries the meaning of identity, of likeness; it encompasses the idea of participation, of sharing.

How, for instance, shall we explain the validity and reasonableness of this portion of your program and of my part in it? What is the meaning of this gathering, made up, I suspect, of Catholics and Protestants in the main, with a Jewish rabbi present to expound in a field that relates to man's deepest convictions? And why is it that all of us, it seems, feel that these exercises ring true? Is it because the members of the National Council of Teachers of English are soft, and kind, and generous? It has become a habit of the contemporary mind to explain such an order of the day by referring

¹ Address before the National Council of Teachers of English at Columbus, Ohio, November 25, 1944.

² Rabbi, Tree of Life Cong., Pittsburgh, Pa.; formerly history lecturer, Duquesne University and University of Pittsburgh.

to the fact of modern liberal thought and toleration, that is, the recognition of the principle of "live and let live." But such an explanation is much too simple for the discerning mind. The phrase "Live and let live" certainly does not account for all that is back of such practices, and it cannot certainly signify their deepest meaning. "Toleration" and "liberalism" are good words, but, as such, they may soon come to the end of significance. These programs do appeal in a genuine way to minds differently attuned and could do so only because there must be a common field of thought and interest that lies deeper than those incidents of time and history for which "toleration" and "liberalism" often seem to stand—only for us to discover from time to time that philosophically they are inadequate.

The field to which we now make appeal is the field of history, which ought to reveal to us why men have acted as they have. . . . It is a fact of history that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, too, are three branches of monotheism in western Asia and in Europe. It is a fact of history that two of those branches during the first five hundred years of Christian history became intertwined in such a way as to permit at no future time a break without causing, thereby, a scandal of history itself! Western civilization has gained its ethics and morality from that synthesis. For the sake of accuracy it must be distinguished by a hyphenated description—the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Nor could we break this bond if we would. History has made it one continuous tradition. The more thoroughly we examine the literatures of this larger tradition, the more do we see in them a relationship that cannot in its very nature ever be violated. As we study carefully the Old Testament, we discover that

the "old" in the Old Testament is not so old; as we examine seriously the New Testament, we discover that the "new" in the New Testament is not so new! This organic relationship between the "old" and the "new" was at no time lost sight of. Even in the several centuries of Jewish suffering and degradation in Europe of the later Middle Ages, Christian scholars never discerned a break in the thread of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Nor would men of strong minds and true hearts anywhere in our day, and under the persuasion of whatsoever political pressure, give consent to a breach in that significant inheritance of Western civilization. We can deny the continuity of that thread as little as we can deny our grandparents!

In looking today at the community of ideas among the major historical religions—Judaism, Christianity, Islam—we have in mind primarily the religions of intelligent and religious men.

Such men are always the minority, but they are the true representatives of their religion in any age, teachers and examples to their fellows. No religion has ever succeeded in bringing all of its adherents to its standards of right living, or within sight of its intellectual and spiritual ideals; and in the highest religions the gulf between the intellectual and moral leaders and the superstitious and depraved sediment of society is widest. But it is not from ignorance and superstition that anything can be learned about a religion; at that end they are all alike.³

The history of religions cannot be adequately understood except as part of the history of culture. So our concern is, for the moment, with intellectual history, with the history of thought—especially during the classic periods of religious rationalism in Europe (the twelfth and thirteenth centuries).

The intellectual relations of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam were unavoid-

³ George Foot Moore, *History of Religions*, II, xi.

able and inevitable. These relations have their source in two historic facts: First, Semitic religion is the root of all three; they can be considered, in a morphological classification, as three branches of monotheistic religion in western Asia and Europe. Second, the religious philosophy, either of the Jews or of the Christians, or of the Mohammedans, goes back to Greek thought, at the center of which stood Aristotle. Whatever were the differences among these three religions lay in the problems of a purely theological and dogmatic nature. *Religiously* the Christian and Arab shared the Jewish world-view in fundamentals. The Bible of the Jews was sacred Scripture to the Christians. Islam owed its existence to the impression in great part that Jewish ideas had made upon the mind of the Arabian prophet. All believed in the doctrine of creation by divine fiat, according to the first chapter of Genesis. All taught that there was a future world where human life, so bitter in this world, will there attain its fulfilment. All three religions believed that the only way in which man can attain such salvation is by conducting himself in accordance with the supernaturally revealed will of God. The main point at issue turned on the question as to which group was in possession of the authoritative revelation of God's will. But also here the contacts between religion and religion were unavoidable, because even differences brought about historical relations, evident in private and public religious disputations, wherein the opponents were compelled to become acquainted with the ideas and materials of one another. There is no doubt that the basic *religious* thought-modes were the same; the ideological material was identical in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

And the basic intellectual problems

were also identical, because in the three religions the intellectual *experience* had been to a large extent identical. Before each of the three religions came into the wider arena of history, the Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans apparently felt no need for philosophy. Each religion had its sacred books. The Jews also had their oral tradition; the Christians also their papal regulations and decrees of the councils; the Mohammedans also the Hadith (a tradition, or narration, relating, or describing a saying or an action, etc., of Mohammed). Thus all three had their written and oral revelations. First the Jews, who had moved out everywhere into the Greco-Roman world, felt the demand to interpret the ideas of Greek philosophy according to the forms of thought of the Jewish Scriptures. Hellenistic-Judaism, especially as seen in the person of Philo (ca. A.D. 50), was an attempt in this direction. Jews and Greeks had mixed in Alexandria; but, in spite of the fact that the former had learned the language of the latter and that Philo had made both traditions his own, there had been no real fusion. The Christians, in the words of a contemporary non-Jewish scholar, "had not succeeded any better, because of their single-hearted devotion to the new Gospel, which reduced everything else to futility in their eyes."⁴ It was left for Islam to bring finally together the two great intellectual streams which had flowed independently in ancient times. And, surprising as it may seem to us today, it is a fact that the Arabs were the transmitters of a living tradition of Aristotelian scholarship, which, according to a great authority, "can be shown to have continued uninterrupted from the days of the Lyceum

⁴ G. Sarton, *The History of Science and the New Humanism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937), p. 83.

through the Syriac, Arabic and Hebrew schools of philosophy."⁵ The Syrian Christians translated the works from the Greek into Syriac. When Christianity was succeeded in the East by Islam, these works were rendered into Arabic by Syrian Christians and by Arab scholars. The Jews lived everywhere in the vast Arabic world for several centuries and during that period became the pupils of the Arabs. Now the European Christians from about 1100 began their foremost activity of translating the Arabic treatises into Latin, in which the Jews played a great role as mediators. By 1250 there was little of real importance in the Arabic philosophic literature of which the Christians were not aware. Certainly by that time, the Arabs, the Jews, and the Christians had each tried to reconcile lay knowledge with religion. And what is *scholasticism* but an attempt in a general way to reconcile lay knowledge with theology? Is it surprising, then, that scholasticism was almost universal in the Middle Ages? The same problem, the amalgamation of rationalism and faith, had to be solved over the entire civilized world.

In this connection it is interesting to note that, while the Jewish rabbi, Maimonides (1135-1204), was working in Cairo on the *Guide for the Perplexed*, Averroes (1126-98) dealt with the same problems at Cordova at the same time in his *Philosophy and Theology*, and likewise Alanus (1128-1203), in his treatise, "On the Method of the Catholic Faith" (*De arte seu de articulis fidei Catholicae*), at Paris, and at the same time! Averroes was a *Mohammedan* theologian. Alanus ab Insulis was a *Christian* theologian.

Such a coincidence ought not to be

⁵ H. A. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929), p. 7.

surprising. The three philosophic literatures—Hebrew, Latin, and Arabic—represented a common tradition. As was said above, they were all based upon Greek philosophy, at the center of which stood Aristotle. The same Greek terminologies, and the same scientific and philosophic conceptions, formed the intellectual background of Arabic philosopher, Jewish philosopher, or Christian philosopher. The three philosophic literatures were in fact one philosophy expressed in different languages. A reader who had mastered any of the philosophic works in one of these three languages found himself treading upon familiar ground when he came to read any work in the other languages. It is for this reason that any present-day Christian scholar familiar with Aquinas' *Summa theologiae* would be able to handle with ease Maimonides' *Moreh Nebuchim*. Since the religious tradition in all three cultures was fundamentally identical, the problem in the large may be stated as having existed in the same way in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: Are the Scriptures amenable to demonstration? What is its speech? Can *all* men understand it? Is its language of analogy (similes and metaphors) adequate for the instruction of all men? Is its language divine? What of the *human* intellect entered into its writing-down? What is its capability to speak to each new age? These and kindred questions emerged in this time and with a great challenge.

If we could meet together for many days to examine the many, many documents, we would see clearly that the thread of intellectual relations and contacts among the great faiths is unbroken—that this history is of a continuous nature. It could be shown, for example, that the interest of the Renaissance and Reformation in Hebrew learning was not

new. If they added new problems and new fields of Semitic learning, they had, nevertheless, the old material and traditional lines of thought upon it. If it can be said—and it *can* with justice be said—that every line of the King James Version of 1611 shows traces of Rabbi David Kimhi and that many lines bear evidence of Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, the explanation lies in the background of the long history of Christian and Jewish intellectual relations. The King James Version of the Bible was an English translation; David Kimhi was a Jewish rabbi and Bible exegete in the Provence (d. 1235); Solomon ben Isaac (Rashi) was a rabbi and Bible commentator in northern France (d. 1105)!

Since I find myself before a group of English teachers, I would, with your approval, leap over to John Milton and his *universal* epic of theology. (The word “universal” is important here. We are interested today in the community of ideas among the great religions.) The Bible was not merely a story-book for him, a *Historienbibel*. It was a book of culture, because it was God’s word.

The greatest contribution toward understanding Milton’s relation to the Hebrew heritage has been made by a man in your own field—Professor Harris Francis Fletcher of the University of Illinois.⁶ In his Foreword to *Milton’s Rabbinical Readings*, Professor Fletcher writes:

Some years ago, Professor James Holly Hanford suggested to me that it might be worth while to investigate systematically the possibility of arranging our knowledge of *Milton’s indebtedness to Semitic courses*. . . . As I worked on the general subject of the Semitic literary influences on Milton and finished my thesis on

⁶ I have in mind his *Milton’s Semitic Studies* (Chicago, 1926); *The Use of the Bible in Milton’s Prose* (Urbana, 1929); for our purpose today, I think mainly of his most valuable and most carefully worked-out study on *Milton’s Rabbinical Readings* (Urbana, 1930).

it, I discovered that, in reality, definite knowledge of Milton’s connections with Semitic literature was almost entirely lacking.⁷

Here we see certain evidence of inaccurate historical phraseology—“Semitic literary influences on Milton” and “Milton’s indebtedness to Semitic sources.” Again that dangerous word “influence”! Now Professor Fletcher knew better, I have no doubt. But he was working (as most of us) in the world of discourse and frame of reference to which he had been accustomed. In fairness, let it be noted that the author’s method otherwise is scientific without a flaw. The magnitude of the knowledge and labor of John Milton has, no doubt, given rise to the popular view of him as an isolated and unique person. While, however, it is true, that he possesses a singular power and achievement, to isolate him is to ignore the conditions under which he could have covered so wide the fields of several branches of difficult and curious learning and under which he could have accomplished so much—that is, the long history of the community of ideas in the Christian and Jewish fields of learning: the contents of the Hebrew Scriptures were an integral part of Christian thought practically from the beginning of Christianity; the Christians inherited the Scriptures with a vast commentary which had grown up out of a civilization, and therefore the Christian civilization would inevitably meet Scripture and Talmud in their entirety; there was no castigation or expurgation of the Church Fathers because of their many references to the writings and materials of rabbinic books. If one may resort to a figure of speech, it could be said that in the nature of the case the Jewish stream took its course on a higher plateau (partly because it has the older)

⁷ P. 7. (Italics mine.)

and released its rivulets that they might run down into the other stream. This volume of thought may be conceived of also as the waters coursing from the mountaintops and higher plateaus, always seeking level ground and creating the great rivers, the common streams. Jews and Christians did not encroach upon each other's bounds; they simply followed a common stream, on different banks of the river. Nevertheless, they call back to each other. Judaism, in its diaspora, had the usual problems that arise among all moving cultures. And though it was more tenacious of its ideas and better fortified with ordinances, it should properly be said that it was not wholly aloof and hedged about. It gave and it received. It received the need and the impulsion to enlarge and clarify its own field of ideas. In the later Middle Ages distinguished Jewish scholars knew the Latin text of the Vulgate—though for pure polemical purposes especially, it is true. The *Pardes*, the fourfold method of interpretation among the Jews of the later Middle Ages, was an adoption of the fourfold scheme of the Christians, though the seeds were already present in the earlier Jewish development. For it is to be remembered that at the very basis of Jewish and Christian exegesis there lay those necessities that would produce common procedures in interpretation. The Reformation and Protestant appeal to the Old Testament ideas and heritage is too well known to call for further comment. We use the word "heritage" because it is not the matter of the Hebrew language merely; it is every connotative and cultural concomitant that it bears. The amount of Christian scholarly study of Semitic and rabbinic literatures during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was enormous. Rabbinic learning was employed to elucidate or illustrate the

New Testament. Milton was a contemporary of a number of England's pioneer rabbinical scholars, such as Cartwright, Drusius, Selden, Pococke, Whitgift, and the others who were in a sense the product of the intense interest in Semitic study induced by the prodigious labors of the translators of the King James Version of the Bible. So Milton was living in this kind of a world. His knowledge and use of the rabbis must not be thought of as particularly unusual in a man of his education and attainments during the seventeenth century. Every scholar who could, used rabbinical material to a greater or lesser extent, depending upon his ability to do so, largely because, in the development of Protestantism, rabbinical commentaries on Scripture had become part of the critical apparatus connected with the study and widest understanding of the biblical text and world of biblical idea, law, and society. John Milton was also part of the humanistic tradition. The *homo trilinguis* of the Renaissance was he who knew the worlds of the Greeks, of the Latins, and of the Hebrews—their complete worlds!

Limited by the wide scope of the present paper and by the time allotted to it on your program, we will now deal with but one of many cases in John Milton which shows these historical relations in flux. In light of what we said earlier, we must warn that similarities do not of themselves prove actual contacts, that the historical evidence for relations always lies first in common material over a long period of time, and, if this is wanting, all comparisons may prove to be fictitious.⁸ John Milton conceived of the act of Creation as an *ordering* of the elements, already existent in Chaos, not the *creating* of those elements themselves.

⁸ I draw for what follows immediately upon Fletcher, *op. cit.*, pp. 81 ff.

In *Paradise Lost* he had much to say about the existence prior to Creation of the elements from which the universe, the cosmos, or, at least as part of the poem implies, the whole Ptolemaic system, was made. And in the *De doctrina* he elaborately refuted the idea of *creatio ex nihilo*. Now we are not going to say that Milton first encountered in rabbinical writings on Scripture the idea of Creation as an ordering of already existent but utterly chaotic elements. Milton's general conception of the Creation of the cosmos is one that had long been known to European thought. The indestructibility of matter was taught by the ancient Greeks, by the Ionian school, by Plato, by Aristotle, and by many of the medieval philosophers—Arabic, Christian, and Jewish. The medieval Jewish philosophers reconciled such a theory with Scripture by the use of allegorical, rational interpretation. But when Milton came to treat the nature of Creation, both in *Paradise Lost* and in the *De doctrina*, he found ready at hand centuries of similar treatment of similar ideas in the writings which now had become the normative sources for Christians who sought out what the Jewish doctors said about their Scriptures. The whole history of the Jews had become also in the eyes of the Christians a font of human experience.

It is worthy of note that in his denial of the theory of *creatio ex nihilo*, in his conception of the existence of the elements before Creation, and in the selection of the four elements, earth, air, fire, and water, Milton has employed precisely the same basic ideas of Creation as those set forth by Ibn Ezra. It is remarkable that he is in complete agreement with the rabbi on all of them. There is a strong suggestion that Milton drew on or at least was familiar with the rabbi's discussion of Creation in Milton's use of the identical argument over the meaning of the Hebrew word "bara," he created, on which

the rabbi also based his chief refutation of the *creatio ex nihilo* theory.⁹

The whole of Fletcher's book is devoted to a careful analysis of similar relations and contacts. Interesting is one of the details in Fletcher's conclusion:

On the whole, the rabbinical commentaries furnished him with embellishments only, and they were not, I think, primarily responsible for many of Milton's fundamental ideas, although the rabbis may well have supported some of his more noticeably Jewish notions, such as the soul's non-survival of bodily death, his strong anti-Trinitarianism, and his support of polygamy based on the Old Testament accounts of it.¹⁰

If we had the time, we could continue to thread the way along this line which most persistently gives evidence of an unavoidable relationship of Christianity and Judaism. Suffice it to say that this part of your program is proof of the reality of the community of ideas among the great faiths today. Otherwise, you would not be listening, nor could I be present to speak.

Have these common ideas, this common religious heritage, anything to offer us today? Let me conclude by quoting the last paragraph of a fine book by a distinguished scholar—Professor William Foxwell Albright's *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process*.

The civilization of that day [the beginning of the Christian Era] was in many respects comparable to what it is today. Philosophy ranged over just as wide fields of speculation; men's religious attitudes varied from the loftiest ethical monotheism to the most benighted superstition, just as today. Moreover, the modern world had, a quarter of a century ago, almost achieved comparable unity under the sway of a culture which was the lineal offspring of Graeco-Roman civilization; a few years later the same world achieved partial unity of political life under the League of Nations; there

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 310.

seemed to be no end to mechanical progress or to the advance of knowledge, employing the tools which had been forged so successfully by the Greeks. Yet today we see Occidental civilization tottering; we see intellectual activity declining with unexampled speed over a large part of the globe; we see a sensational revival of such pseudo-sciences as astrology (Babylonian in origin), Neo-Gnosticism ("New Thought" in all its varied forms), racial mysticism, etc.;

we see scientific methods and discoveries judged by Marxist and racist gauges instead of by independent scientific standards. In short, we are in a world which is strangely like the Graeco-Roman world of the first century B.C. We need reawakening of faith in the God of the majestic theophany on Mount Sinai, in the God of Elijah's vision at Horeb, in the God of the Jewish exiles in Babylonia, in the God of the Agony at Gethsemane. . . .

Time and the Humanities

TREMAINE McDOWELL¹

I

I ACCEPT Time absolutely," declared Walt Whitman. Margaret Fuller announced in similar fashion that she accepted the universe, and Thomas Carlyle growled: "Gad, she'd better!" We are inclined, at first thought, to say the same of Whitman.

On second thought, we recognize that an absolute acceptance of time—past, present, and future—may be no mean achievement. Among three such diverse figures as Henry Ford, Neville Chamberlain, and Oswald Spengler there is little resemblance, but they have one characteristic in common. Each has revealed a capacity for questioning the validity of one or another of the tenses.

When Henry Ford testified under oath that he believed history to be bunk, he dramatized his skepticism concerning the past. We are all aware that he has since recanted (Gad, he'd better!) and has become, if not historically minded, at least antiquarianly inclined. We are also aware that the average American commonly sees only the present and that, in the college and university world, the same myopia frequently overtakes men who lose contact with the humanities.

When Neville Chamberlain persuaded himself that it was possible to live with Hitler on the terms on which Chamberlain conducted his own personal business in pre-war Birmingham, he achieved one of the most monumental denials of the present that this century has witnessed. Other elderly statesmen, abroad and at home, have shown themselves equally unconscious of the passing of time—and so have too many teachers of the humanities.

When Oswald Spengler wrote *The Decline of the West*, he held out little hope for the future: "The 19th and 20th centuries, hitherto looked on as the highest point of an ascending line of world-history, are in reality a stage of life which may be observed in every culture that has ripened to its limit." Our fate is to be "used up": "The expansive tendency is a doom, . . . which grips, forces into service, and uses up the late mankind of the world-city stage"—meaning us. Doubt concerning the future, we have all observed, frequently develops out of skepticism concerning the present. This, at least by implication, was the attitude of the most disillusioned of our novelists of the 1920's and the 1930's, and this is at times the attitude of T. S. Eliot and his like-minded contemporaries among the poets and the scholastics.

¹ Professor of English, University of Minnesota.

II

If absolute acceptance of time is as difficult as these instances suggest, Whitman's position deserves further examination. Looking into *Leaves of Grass*, we find that his conception of time is an integral part of his democratic faith. He reconciles the tenses not by making them identical, in the manner of the ancients and certain of the moderns, but by stressing their similarity and their continuity in an open universe.

A vast similitude interlocks all, . . .
All lives and death, all of the past, present, and future,
And shall forever span them and compactly hold them and enclose them.

This progression of time he interprets in the terms of an interlocking sequence. Speaking not only for himself but for the present era, he announces: "I am an acme of things accomplish'd, and I am an encloser of things to come."

The past commands Whitman's utmost respect:

Dead poets, philosophers, priests,
Martyrs, artists, inventors, governments long since,
Language-shapers on other shores,
Nations once powerful, now reduced, withdrawn, or desolate,
I dare not proceed till I respectfully credit what you have left, wafted hither.

But, for the living, the immediate significance of the past lies in its contribution to our central link. Again speaking for all mankind, he announces:

[I come]
With antecedents,
With my fathers and mothers and the accumulations of past ages,
With all which, had it not been, I would not now be here, as I am.

Out of the past pours the motive force of the present: "The past is the push of you, me, all," and again:

As a projectile form'd, impell'd, passing a certain line, keeps on,
So the present, utterly form'd, impell'd by the past.

The present is to Whitman so self-evidently the focal point of all time that he does not pause to argue its dominance. He honors the past, trusts the future, and writes most often of the present.

Looking into the future, Whitman experiences neither fear nor doubt.

Have you feared that the future would be nothing to you?
Is today nothing? Is the beginningless past nothing?
If the future is nothing, they are just as surely nothing.

He has unlimited patience; he does not expect to cross over Jordan or enter the Promised Land; he is content to know that only the long cycles of time can bridge the gap between his good but imperfect present and the infinite perfection which he believes will ultimately come into being. "A few quadrillions of eras, a few octillions of cubic leagues do not hazard the span or make it impatient." And when, after quadrillions of eras, the future arrives, it will fulfil America's utmost hopes.

Years of the unperform'd! your horizon rises—I see it parting away for more august dramas;
I see not America only—I see not only Liberty's nations, but other nations preparing;
I see tremendous entrances and exits—I see new combinations—I see the solidarity of races;
I see that force advancing with irresistible power on the world's stage . . .
The perform'd America and Europe grow dim, retiring in shadow behind me,
The unperformed, more gigantic than ever, advance, advance upon me.

When Whitman wrote *Leaves of Grass*, he was still close to 1848, and he used its language of enthusiasm. Were he living today, he might employ his talent for the

reconciliation of opposites to translate this vision into terms more acceptable to science. In any case, his was and is an authentic voice of American democracy.

III

For us who live in and for the humanities, *Leaves of Grass* has particular relevance. After the coming of civilization, a degree of social change which had required fifty thousand years in prehistory was accomplished within a century; now it is effected within a decade. This intensified tempo of change sweeps too many of us into the future before we have discovered that the past has become the present. In such days, therefore, we cannot ask ourselves too critically: Which is our tense?

A century ago Whitman was too busy with the common man to take stock of the colleges, but his great ally, Ralph Waldo Emerson, gave them his close attention. (What a professor of the humanities Emerson would have been!) "The college, the school of art," he concluded, "pin me down. They look backward and not forward." (Which helps explain why Harvard never offered him a professorship.) God or truth or law or necessity *is*, Emerson insisted, not *was*. If we call the roll of the humanities in the 1940's and if we are honest with ourselves, we discover that at certain points we still operate backward-looking colleges and backward-looking schools of art.

Philosophy.—Certain of its exponents who believe they live outside time seem to their associates to live only in the past. There are, however, departments of philosophy which complement their courses in the ancients with courses in everyday logic and applied ethics, philosophy in literature, social philosophy, contempo-

rary European thought, and American philosophy.

History.—If John Citizen knows little American and less ancient history, this ratio between the tenses is reversed by past-minded departments of history. Others have discovered that valleys of dead men's bones can be transformed into a usable part by organizing broad programs in the general culture of an epoch or a nation: Greek, medieval, or American.

The fine arts.—Traditionalists, so long the custodians of the museum art of the past that they see no art in the living present, are still occupied with the mere trivia of Byzantine and baroque. But they are challenged by a lively minority who use the work of Thomas Hart Benton, Reginald Marsh, Adolph Dehn, and John Steuart Curry to interpret contemporary America.

The classics.—As Roscoe Pound reminds us, "To cease to teach the classics is to deprive the children of the oncoming generation of opportunity of fruitful contact with a decisive element in the civilization in which it is to live." But students of the classics so often allow their preoccupation with the past to blind them to the present that their influence on the future may be, despite the efforts of the dean emeritus of the Harvard Law School, negligible.

Modern languages and literatures.—The gyrations of student interest in foreign languages, stimulated by international affairs and vocational opportunities, make it more and more difficult for teachers to bring Dante, Molière, and Goethe to American undergraduates. The current suggestion that colleges should set up one department of tool courses in languages and another in literatures is a desperate remedy which might conceivably quicken interest in

the once-modern European literatures or, more possibly, send them on the way of Homer and Horace.

English literature.—It is not disastrous if an occasional professor of English disappears into the Middle Ages or the seventeenth century and never returns, provided his department as a whole keeps open its lines of communication with the present. But how many departments actually give authors of the present century the attention they deserve, in comparison with the authors of earlier periods, on the basis either of relevance to humane living in the United States or of literary merit as judged by absolute standards?

The tendency of past-conscious professors of English to lead their departments back into the past is corrected in part by courses in literary types and in recent literature. Teachers of American literature are becoming increasingly conscious that one of their functions is to bridge past and present—a function which, it must be admitted, they frequently evade. Instead of inflicting a questionnaire on my colleagues in this field, I have asked well-informed men in representative publishing houses whether college courses in American literature bring the record down to today. The answer is that (a), in planning their work, the majority of teachers propose to do so and a sizable minority do not and that (b), in classroom practice, a very large minority, possibly even the majority, permit lack of time or inclination to prevent them from reaching the present. As long as American literature has a distinguished present and an assured future, there is no necessity for complete preoccupation with its past.

In attempting to explain why the number of students in the humanities has not increased during the last fifty years in

proportion to the general increase in college enrolment, we are accustomed to insist that the fault is with superficial youngsters who have no sound sense of human values. Having said this, we sit down and wait for “a return to the humanities.” A flurry of revived interest, such as the present war is provoking, encourages us to continue sitting and waiting. To put the matter simply, the youngsters are living in the present; they have little inclination to return to our past, and the only sure way in which we can make ourselves felt is to bring that past to them.

IV

The current discussion of general education and the humanities is heartening evidence of vitality in the colleges. As for the new programs being organized in the humanities, they are in certain instances corrective, in others constructive, and in still others potentially destructive. Such programs are corrective when they grow out of a recognition that, in the college in question, the humanities have not been taught humanely and that a new program is necessary to compensate for deficiencies within departments. They may be at the same time creative if they illuminate the minds of students and, what is perhaps equally important, the minds of teachers by pooling the resources of various departments for an examination of crucial ideas or a crucial period in the history of mankind.

Programs in the humanities can become destructive if they are directed by men who conceive of time as an identity. Mark Van Doren seems to argue for the continuity of time in chapter ii of his *Liberal Education*. “The completely educated person,” he remarks, “is one . . . who has settled some sort of relation in

his mind between past, present, and future." To present that relation, he chooses an appropriate symbol of movement: "The educated person recognizes no dry stretch between now and then. They are one river." And he appears to believe that for us ultimate reality is to be found in our own day, when he quotes with approval Whitehead's dictum: "The present contains all there is." For all this we disciples of the humanities are grateful—so grateful that we should prefer to ignore, if that were possible, Mr. Van Doren's recantation in chapter iv. There he declares: "Greek literature is not everything, yet it is the heart of what we need to know, along with Roman literature, its derivative." In Greek and Latin, man finds "an account of the world, the clearest and grandest that we have." When we read the ancients, we should remember that the setting of their lives and of ours are "substantially the same." In brief, "the medium of liberal education is that portion of the past which is always present"—but nothing of the present not found in the past. Such opinions make it easy for Mr. Van Doren to propose, as his culminating "Idea of a College," a return to the trivium and the quadrivium and to the great books of St. John's.

These quotations have been drawn from Mr. Van Doren's pages without prejudice, as representative of a book widely read at the moment in the academic world. His pronouncements are paralleled in various universities, perhaps most recently by Norman Foerster, who insists that we must devote ourselves to "the abiding truths which make the distinction between past and present unimportant." For all such spokesmen

of traditionalism, Whitman and Emerson and thoroughgoing democrats in our century have the same reply: To call the distinctions between past and present unimportant is to cut us off from any future other than the past.

In practice, programs in the humanities can rarely be confined to any "portion of the past." An eastern university which makes Goethe the terminal author in a course in the humanities wisely continues the story in a second course, "Contemporary Civilization" (which, to avoid misunderstanding, might well have been called "Contemporary Humanities"). In a second university, according to report, the traditionalist proposals of scholastics in the administration are frequently given contemporary relevance by classroom instructors who have not yet lost contact with the present. At a third university the pressures of the present are destroying an ambitious program in the humanities heavily weighted in favor of the ancients.

"I accept Time absolutely." Thus Whitman. And again:

The law of the past cannot be eluded,
The law of the present and the future cannot
be eluded,
The law of the living cannot be eluded, it is
eternal.

In Whitman's terms every university division of the humanities and each college department within the humanities should link "the beginningless past" with "the years of the unperformed." And every course which recognizes that the law of the tenses cannot be eluded and that the law of the present is eternal becomes "an acme of things accomplish'd" and "an encloser of things to come."

*English Studies in the Postwar World*¹

E. K. BROWN²

I

IN THE winter of 1928 I went one evening to a public debate in the Rue de la Sorbonne. It was to be opened by M. Georges Guy-Grand, a well-known popularizer of sociology, who was to call in question the high place the humanities held in French education. The defense of the humanities was to come from one of the brothers Bérard. I shall not recite, or even summarize, M. Guy-Grand's strictures, partly because there is always this to be said for the enemies of the humanities—they tell the same story. You could read the essence of what he said in any American magazine article of the current year in which our shortcomings were the theme. Another reason why I shall not try to repeat what he said, or its gist, is that I did not long give him my attention. I was looking about in the hope that I could identify M. Léon or M. Victor Bérard. In one corner of the room sat a man whose face I had seen before in another Parisian chamber of debate, a long striking face, with a noble fore-

head, a delicate nose, and a thin drooping gray mustache. After M. Guy-Grand had sat down, the chairman turned toward the corner that had caught my attention and said that at the last moment M. Bérard (I still don't know whether it was Léon or Victor) had found himself indisposed and that his place would be taken by the leader of the Socialist party in France, M. Léon Blum.

I have always been a tireless lecture-goer, and this was to be one of my richest rewards for the conviction that lectures, and all forms of public speech, are excellent instruction and excellent fun. M. Blum began by expressing his satisfaction at the terms in which M. Guy-Grand had posed the question when he had criticized certain requirements for entrance to the universities of France as harmful to the national society. M. Guy-Grand had strongly attacked the requirement by which all who undertake the higher study of French language and literature must have passed the baccalaureate examinations in Latin and in Greek and must carry on advanced studies in the classical languages and literatures concurrently with their studies in French. Why, he had asked, should the path to higher studies, higher degrees, and, accordingly, higher positions in French be barred by the conservative and aristocratic disciplines? Would it not be just as useful, more useful, if the association of French literature were with the social sciences? Would not the study of the national literature gain, he inquired, if its masters and novices had, many of them,

¹ An address given at the thirty-first annual meeting of the College Conference on English in the Central Atlantic States, November 25, 1944.

[As Professor Brown explained at the outset, he was chairman of the department of English at Cornell University when invited to speak to the conference. By the time he gave the address he was professor of English at the University of Chicago but "not yet qualified," he said, "to formulate the aims, or to measure the success, of the Chicago policies." Mr. Brown also remarked that he proposed to speak, not of the problems presented by the returning veterans, but of "those which will long remain with us."—EDITOR.]

² Professor of English, University of Chicago.

or all of them, intimate knowledge of the structure of the modern world? Might not such knowledge be as valuable, more valuable, more valuable by far, than a knowledge of ancient civilization and its records?

To this M. Blum replied circuitously. He directed our attention to another requirement for entrance to the universities of France, which, he supposed, brimmed M. Guy-Grand's heart with joy—a requirement which was a museum specimen of that sort of educational paradise to which M. Guy-Grand invited us. Among the languages a candidate for entrance to the universities might offer were: Greek, Latin, English, German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, and Malgache. Particularly he directed our attention to a note following this general statement, saying that Malgache, and Malgache alone, might be credited as equivalent to two languages. The wisdom of the governors of our society, he stated, comes to this: Spanish is as valuable as Greek, Russian is as valuable as Latin, and Malgache is as valuable as Greek and Latin put together. There, he concluded, is the degree of in-spissated folly he would have expected our governors to show.

The importance attached to Malgache he took to be a perfect illustration of the society in which we lived. It was a world in chaos: Greek plus Latin equals Malgache equals chaos. And when the great day came, when the Socialist party assumed undisputed power, chaos would end. It would surely be an easy matter, he went on, to sweep away the dusty vestiges of a social idea which could authorize the absurd equation. And the Socialist party would make very sure that no French child would waver on the path leading to the sacred beauty of Homer and the sacred wisdom of Plato

because his mind (or, as was more likely, his father's mind) was muddled by utilitarian arguments put forth by cynical money-minded capitalists wishing to have in their outer offices not men but serflike clerks, deciphering for the monetary gain of their employer the language of the island of Madagascar.

That I agree with M. Blum—that is the substance of what I have to say today.

II

The plight of the humanities is worse on this continent than it had then become in France. The strongest factor in creating our present difficulties is one over which we humanists have almost no control, and it is fair to say that no matter what we might have done, or what our predecessors might have done, this factor would have operated strongly and decisively. It has never been in the power of the humanists, and it is not in our power now, to make fundamental change in the North American society. Education reflects society, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly; it alters to reflect society. It must; perhaps it should. The nature of our society is against the prosperity of the humanities.

I am not often able to agree with anything that is said about education by John Dewey; but I believe he is wholly right when he objects, as in a recent number of the *American Scholar*, to the practice of humanists in referring our woes to the machinations of radical educators, and notably professors of education. To do so is, indeed, to take far too short a view. We must rather inquire why it is that radical educators and notably professors of education are able to put their doctrines into effect. Why, for instance, has the child-centered curriculum made its way? Simply because it is a formula-

tion in educational terms of powerful movements in our society. And Dewey is quite right in supposing that a kind of education which is irrelevant to the real needs of a society, or unacceptable to the main ideals of a society, will not long endure in that society.

Now, three marks of the kind of society in which we live are utilitarianism, anarchy, and sentimentalism. I am not such a pessimist as to believe that they are the only marks or the deepest marks of that society; but they are very important marks of it. I should like briefly to explore these qualities as they express themselves in education, since they and not the professors of education are our real foes.

The subject is vast, and, of course, I do not mean to give all my time to it. I am sure you will forgive me, and you may even enjoy it, if I limit what I have to say about utilitarianism, anarchy, and sentimentalism to happenings that came within my own experience in a university which shall be nameless.

First, utilitarianism. Our department in that university had experimented very pertinaciously with the freshman course in English, required of almost all students. We believed, and I think we were right, that it was our largest contribution to the intellectual well-being of the university; and, as such, it had first place in our thoughts. The formula by which we worked had two parts: first, the chief objective was the improvement of writing; second, the right use of reading was the best means to improve writing. We believed that poetry and fiction rightly used would do more to improve writing than recent expository prose. As the freshman course stood, expository reading accompanied and subserved practice in writing, in the first semester, and, in the second, gave way to fiction, lyrical

poetry, and a play of Shakespeare, again accompanying and subserving practice in writing. The head of one of the departments of engineering viewed our program for the second semester not with one auspicious and one dropping eye but with two frankly dropping eyes. Were his boys to misuse their time by reading Browning, Milton, and Shakespeare? It was not to be thought of. Could we not give them neat clipped models of expository prose, the sort of prose they would be expected to use in their reports? Here is a specimen of utilitarianism, a specimen the more interesting because it discloses the unconscious arrogance of the modern utilitarian. This man actually believes that he knows better than the department of English what would improve writing and stimulate to the formation of a creditable style. He asked us to improve the writing of his charges. We agreed to make the attempt. As a means toward the goal which he had set, we had recourse to some material that was not wholly utilitarian, believing, like the professor of English in the *Male Animal*, that Bartolomeo Vanzetti has more to teach about the secrets of prose than Herbert Hoover. Perhaps you will remember that the professor of English who held that view in the play got into a great deal of trouble. So did we. Why? In a word, because we were suspected of bootlegging culture—that is, true education, into a course that had been designed as training. So deep is this engineer's distrust of education that he wished to oust poetry even when poetry, in our view, which is the expert's view, accomplished superbly a utilitarian end.

The engineer is cited here as an instance of the penetration into universities of the utilitarianism that marks our society. As Cardinal Newman observed of Cato: "He despised that refinement

or enlargement of mind of which he had no experience." He had rather, much rather, that the neat, clear, hard minds of his boys should not be confused by culture. His aim is to produce engineers, and, like another contributor to the recent symposium in the *American Scholar*, he frankly does not care about the quality of his products except in so far as they are engineers.

I turn from utilitarianism to anarchy. To a quite extraordinary degree our society lacks a scale of agreed values. We are at odds about all sorts of values, moral and social, aesthetic and religious. Education in the humanities will, I think, produce its maximum of effect only when there is in the surrounding society a basic agreement about values. Our fundamental uncertainty about values finds expression in education in the elective system. "The great criminal," says my president, "was Mr. Eliot, who, as president of Harvard, applied his genius, skill, and longevity to the task of robbing American youth of their cultural heritage. Since he held that there were no such things as good or bad subjects of study, his laudable effort to open the curriculum to good ones naturally led him to open it to bad ones, and finally to destroy it altogether." Latin plus Greek equals Malgache equals chaos.

For thirty years at least the department of which I was briefly a member, along with very many other English departments in the country, accepted the view that it made very little difference what authors a student reads. Mr. A reads Shakespeare, Chaucer, the eighteenth century, Browning, and the novel; Miss B reads Milton, Wordsworth, American literature, and the drama. Both graduate with good standing as majors in English. A equals B. This is precisely what I mean by anarchy. It is not

confined to departments of English. So great is my aversion from anarchy that I will not only readily subscribe to the following statement of Irving Babbitt's:

Two men who have taken the same course in Horace have at least a fund of common memories and allusions; whereas if one of them elect a course in Ibsen instead of Horace, they will not only have different memories, but, so far as they are touched by the spirit of their authors, different ideals. Only a pure radical can imagine that it is an unmixed gain for education to be so centrifugal that [the link of union is] an intercollegiate football game.

I shall go further. Not only should I prefer with Babbitt that both men read Horace; if the requirement of a course in Horace were pronounced impossible, rather than have one of them reading Horace and the other Ibsen, I should even prefer that both read Ibsen.

I have spoken of utilitarianism and of anarchy, and I have suggested that these forces are formidable in our universities because they are formidable in our society. About the third enemy of the liberal arts, sentimentalism, I shall be brief. Sentimentalism in education is related to a misconception of equality. The true conception of equality in education was Napoleon's career open to talents. It is imprudent for universities, and it is worse than imprudent for societies, to permit the decision whether or not a boy or girl should receive higher education to depend on a family's income. All who could profit from higher education should receive it. Jefferson's enthusiasm for higher education—an enthusiasm which led him to found one of the first of the state universities—was born of his wish to "avail the State of those talents which nature has sown as liberally among the poor as among the rich, but which perish without use, if not sought for and cultivated." I was delighted to hear early this year the report that the faculty

of one of the most famous liberal arts colleges in New England has found the V-12 trainees superior to its normal freshmen classes and is seeking to make sure that after the war the really fit continue to come to it instead of gilded youth and *filis à papa*. I believe absolutely in the conception of equality in education exemplified here.

The misconception of equality might be described as the cult of the lame ducks. I have no antipathy to lame ducks—like most teachers, I have a weakness for them—but there is great peril in a system of higher education which considers their interests above those of the *élite*. It seems to me that, by and large, universities give far too much thought to the lower 30 per cent of their students and far too little to the top 30 per cent and almost none at all to the special needs of the top 10 per cent. In the long run any society which fails to make full use of its intellectual *élite* will be subdued by another society which does not fail, and in the meantime—and it may be a long meantime—it will have a type of life less vivid, less vigorous, and less complete than it should be.

III

I pass to some remarks about the steps I believe that we should take to improve our chances of survival.

How should our programs be ordered? Here I come to the most difficult question I am to face. First, I should like to mention an ideal which is impossible, I fear, of realization here and now; but, by comparison with it, we may tell how good any program that we could realize might be. The impossible ideal would be a course such as the Oxford course in *literae humaniores*, or "Greats," as it is called (classical civilization along with

the general history of philosophy), supplemented, as it is not at Oxford, by serious studies in modern literature, fine arts, and history, notably contemporary literature, fine arts, and history. There, it seems to me, is the best course of studies in the liberal arts—a course which would lead the student into the spirit of two great civilizations from which most that is good and most that is beautiful have come and which would illustrate for him the continuance in modern civilizations right down to the world he inhabits of the phenomena which had been closely examined in their earlier expressions. For the large majority of our students I do not think that we can hope to realize this ideal, and I here part company reluctantly with Professor Edward Kennard Rand. The society in which we live will not authorize or support a system of education inspired by this ideal. Instead of saying why I do not think we can hope that the majority of our students could follow such a course, let me do what is much more agreeable—say that we should make every conceivable effort (one such effort would be the generous provision of scholarships) to induce the best of our students, the top 10 per cent, to follow this course of studies. Last fall I was lecturing in New Haven just a week before the death of Karl Young; and you will pardon me for referring to what he then said to me: "The chief justification of a university is what it does with the top 10 per cent of its students, and the best single thing we in English can do with the top 10 per cent of *our* students is to persuade them to acquaint themselves with the classics."

I agree with those remarks, and I remind you that the man who made them was not a closet scholar but served, with extraordinary success, as the head of an English department in a large midwest-

ern university, and I would add that he acted steadily, and with that fierce impatience of mediocrity and confusion that marked everything Karl Young did, to enlarge the audience of the department of the classics.

The 90 per cent will remain, and for them something else must be devised; and it is very important, crucially important, that it be the right thing. It should be as much like the course that I have outlined for the 10 per cent as we can possibly make it, which means as close as our society will allow us to make it. We shall have to sacrifice the Greek language certainly and, I sadly fear, the Latin language also. Much can be done, however, in the study of the classics, even of classical literature, without the aid of the languages. The literature, the philosophy, the history, and in less degree the fine arts of the ancient world would make a very large part of the program. They would lay the basis for the following study of the literature, the philosophy, the history, and, again in less degree, the fine arts of the modern world. We may not sacrifice the acquaintance with language, the intimate familiarity with its process, the love of its quirks. I should propose that this be attained by two expedients, each valuable for other reasons: the close study of the development of the English language, at least from the Norman Conquest to modern times, and the close study of one modern foreign language. To write English with great distinction, acquaintance with Latin is a necessity; to write it with some delicacy and some power, the knowledge of its history may suffice. I do not need to say how important it is that students have some means of contrasting the authors and movements in English and American literature, the tendencies in English and American civilization,

with the authors and movements in some literature, the tendencies in some civilization, profoundly unlike these. Indeed, I should say that, without the knowledge that enables one to do this, no judgments on our own authors and movements and tendencies will have solidity or balance.

I turn with much uncertainty to the requirements in science. When I gave the first draft of this paper to a colleague whose knowledge of science far exceeds mine, he criticized me sharply for, as he said, "dismissing science in a single paragraph." I dealt with science so briefly not because I think its place in modern education a small one—one would need to be a lunatic to think so—but because I myself am a product of the vicious system of premature, eccentric, and excessive specialization I am attacking. I simply lack the foundations one would need in order to suggest the form the study of science should assume in programs in the liberal arts. As a minimum, and with the proper deference to those who know so much more than I do, I suggest two undertakings of substantial importance: a survey of scientific thought in the modern period (and it is not for me to define the limits of the word "modern" here) and a laboratory course in one science, the principal aim in which would be not the acquisition of specific knowledge but the initiation into scientific methods of procedure. I assume that some sciences would serve this end better than others, and I imagine that there is one science which would serve it best of all; but of my own knowledge I do not know which it is, and accordingly I leave the further elaboration of this part of the program to others. To the survey of scientific thought some would object that this is *talkee-talkee*; and to the objection I reply that it would be *talkee-talkee* if it

were given by a practitioner of *talkee-talkee* and not otherwise.

What I have described would constitute the nucleus of the program: the study of Greco-Roman literature, philosophy, history, fine arts, of modern literature, philosophy, history, fine arts, of one modern foreign language, of the development of the English language, of modern scientific thought, and of one laboratory science. It would be compulsory—all of it. This is the rigid element in the program. I estimate—you will not expect me to go into details now—that it could be dealt with in about two-thirds of the student's total time in his first two years and about one-half of his time in the upper years. The remainder of his time should be devoted in unequal proportions to the attainment of two other aims.

One aim, the more important, would be study in the field of his special interest: he would elect the field, and with the election, as with a student in a British or French university today, his freedom would practically end. The course of studies within the field of his special interest would in the main be strictly prescribed. Of every student comprehensive examinations would be required. It is true that the need for such examinations is not so great when the curriculum is fixed as when it has the heedless vagueness, the casual spottiness, of so many liberal arts colleges today. I shall frankly say that I can find no common ground whatever with those of my colleagues who doubt the need for comprehensive examinations in our present state. Even in the strictly ordered program for which I am contending, comprehensive examinations have an important function. A danger that must be averted is that the student may regard what he learns from several departments, even from several

instructors within the same department, as separate knowledges. It is essential that he correlate and unify. By its existence the comprehensive examination is a stimulus and also a warning to correlate and unify. As a subsidiary reason for the comprehensive examination, I should like to cite a practice of the department at Chicago. The candidate for the Master's degree in English at Chicago must pass examinations on a set list of books, not one hundred but about seventy-five. Most of these books are interpreted in courses; but there is informal agreement that a few shall not be lectured on in a given period. These the student prepares for himself, using the methods of study which he has learned to apply under the direction of his instructors. There is, of course, a set of lectures on method in literary study.

The other aim, which I have described as less important than the attainment of reasonable proficiency in a field of election, is the cultivation of the student's varied curiosities. He should be free to explore the elementary reaches of what subjects most arouse his curiosity, a vestige of the elective system as currently practiced in most liberal arts colleges. A maximum of about one-eighth of his total time might be kept free for election in this sense.

IV

In our teaching of literature we must always bear in mind that literature is an art, a vision, and a process. It is an art at the service of a vision, and its history is a significant process which illuminates both the art and the vision. To neglect any of these aspects is to mutilate our subject.

It is often mutilated by neglect of its function as an art. To speak of an area which has long held special interest for

me, the reflective prose of the Victorian age, I suggest that many courses in this topic ignore the art of literature. So concerned are they with the formulation of the vision, and with the tracing of the process, that the art without which the vision would have been inoperative, without which the process would have lost its highest colors and its deepest suggestions, is left to take care of itself. On a shelf in my bookcase stand about a dozen general critical studies of Matthew Arnold; but there is not one of them which will tell you which of the *Essays in Criticism, First Series* were originally used as lectures. Yet to the student of Arnold it is obvious that a work first intended for the lecture platform is very different in the handling of ideas from a work first intended for a magazine. The moment we minimize literature as an art we begin to lose something which was not only very important to the author we study but something which is in large measure responsible for the survival of the work. Why is it that scarcely anyone today reads Fitzjames Stephen's *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* or J. C. Shairp's *Culture and Religion*, whereas *Culture and Anarchy* survives? Largely because in Arnold the art is triumphant, and in Stephen and Shairp it falters.

I emphasize the importance of studying the artistic qualities of literature because I believe that in the postwar world there is great danger of courses arising in which literature will be nothing more than a handmaid to the social sciences. The directive from the headquarters of the Army Service Training Program to relate work in English with work in history and geography all too often led departments of English, and authors of textbooks in English, to ignore the artistic qualities in the prose set for study. It was not the intention of the Army that

this should be; it was because many of our colleagues either did not care sufficiently for the artistic qualities of literature or considered that, when the world was in flames, art was a luxury. Art is never a luxury, and it can never be dispensed with or put in the background without incalculable loss. Musicians and painters have perhaps been wiser than we have been; and I trust that in the years ahead we shall remember that nothing is a part of literature unless it has high artistic excellence. If it lacks high artistic excellence, it has no place in our programs.

Literature is also a vision. No one has better expressed its importance as vision than Alfred North Whitehead. In *Science and the Modern World* he discriminates between the knowledge of nature which is provided by science and the knowledge of nature which is provided by literature.

Wordsworth was drunk with nature. But he was a thoughtful, well-read man, with philosophical interests, and sane even to the point of prosiness. . . . [Wordsworth] alleges against science its absorption in abstractions. His consistent theme is that the important facts of nature elude the scientific method. . . . His theme is nature *in solido*, that is to say, he dwells on that mysterious presence of surrounding things, which imposes itself on any separate element that we set up as an individual for its own sake. He always grasps the whole of nature as involved in the tonality of the particular instance.

This, in the simpler language I am using, is what I should call Wordsworth's vision. How important it is Whitehead goes on to emphasize:

In thus citing Wordsworth the point which I wish to make is that we forget how strained and paradoxical is the view of nature which modern science imposes on our thoughts. Wordsworth, to the height of genius, expresses the concrete facts of our apprehension, facts which are distorted in the scientific analysis.

Whitehead makes claims no less lofty for the vision of Shelley; but we need not now follow him. One example will serve our purpose.

Many of our colleagues have been so narrowly scientific in method and even perhaps in temper that both in their studies and in their teaching they have evaded the visions in literature. They have wished to deal with those aspects of literature which can be weighed and measured; and from voyages on strange seas of thought alone, or in the company of their classes, they have held back. But no teaching of literature which ignores the vision can conceivably be adequate. No professor of literature can be accepted as in his right place if he questions that literature, like every art, conveys knowledge—knowledge different in sort from scientific knowledge but no less valid and no less indispensable. If our subject does not have the high place that it once had, a principal reason lies right here. We do not loudly and persuasively proclaim that we deal in a kind of valid and indispensable knowledge that cannot be found outside the arts and religion.

Literature is also a process, that is to say, it has a history, and the history is significant. Ten years ago it would not have been necessary to say that no work of art could be adequately understood or appraised without reference to its place in a historical process. Everyone would have agreed. Today the state of literary studies is one of reaction against literary history; particularly among younger scholars is the reaction pronounced. I have much sympathy with the reaction. The rebels have fought for more careful reading than used to be customary. I think we must all agree that any movement to make reading more careful is a good one, for even in graduate schools nothing is truer than that students sim-

ply do not know how to read. With the positive aim of the new analytic critics I have, then, every sympathy; but the area in literary studies which they neglect if they do not actually contest its value, the discipline of literary history, is the point at issue. The kind of literary history which used to be taught was all too often unduly simplified and even arid: but that some kind of literary history is necessary seems obvious to me, and if it is to be an adequate kind it must rest on knowledge and discrimination in the areas I have described as "art" and "vision."

V

For the student who elects English language and literature as his special field, what course of studies should we arrange? He will come to us, as he does not today, with a clear and reasonably full conception of classical literature and civilization; and either before he comes to us, or concurrently with his work in our department, he will acquire a clear and reasonably full conception of modern literature, civilization, and philosophy, the English and American performances in these receiving a strong stress. For the subject "English" we shall have much less time than we have today; but, on the other hand, many of the aims we seek—for instance, the perception of literature as a process—will be achieved partly or wholly in co-operative courses such as I have described. We all know that today the typical student who comes to Milton comes with no knowledge of Homer, Vergil, or Dante or of English history during the Commonwealth; and many of our Milton courses devote half the time to preparatory studies. I have heard of one Milton course in which it was a rare year when students made their way through preparatory studies and actually came to grips with the first book of

Paradise Lost. What economies we can make when we do not require to lay such foundations!

Let us suppose, to be concrete, that we shall have the special student with us for six hours in his junior year and six hours in his senior year. What should be done with the twelve hours? One of the educational objectives that the general course of studies does not fully attain is the close examination of a relatively limited body of material. I believe that we have exaggerated the importance of this aim in our present curricula; we have allowed courses to creep in which deal with relatively trivial material and have comforted ourselves by murmuring that, at any rate, it was a good thing to study something exhaustively. It is a good thing to study something exhaustively, but the thing studied should be very much worth studying. In a recent article Dorothy Canfield Fisher has invited us to remember how short the student's years in college are and to sift our offerings, and even the detailed prescriptions in our courses, asking ourselves: Is this really necessary? I think that is exceedingly wise advice. I think that we should rigorously exclude from undergraduate programs whatever fails to meet this test.

The close study of a relatively limited body of material which is of unquestioned importance: that should be among our aims. Clearly it leads us first to the major plays of Shakespeare. I should like to see three of our twelve hours go to them. And three to a similar study of Milton together with Chaucer. Half our time with the student is now taken. I fancy that most of you will agree that Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Milton have the first claims on the time of our student, and with these writers the qualities of literature as art and as vision are

magnificent. With the more recent periods of literature doubt and difference of opinion increase. I am hesitant about defining the rest of the program, but I shall offer two suggestions.

I firmly believe that one of the best exercises we can assign to a student in his final year is what is called the "graduating essay." I had the pleasure last year of directing one such essay, a study of Charlotte and Emily Brontë. I believe that some important topic, not too narrow, and certainly not too dull, should be given to each of our special students (chosen by him, not given to him, if possible) and that a course of reading and conferences should be planned to accompany the investigation. In our study of the Brontës we read together a few of the shorter Gothic tales, a novel of Sir Walter's, a novel of Miss Edgeworth's, and a novel of Hardy's; we sifted the accounts of the Brontës given by Mrs. Gaskell, Mr. Shorter, and more recent biographers; we read studies of the craft of the novel; and all this was, of course, peripheral. The heart of the program was the seven Brontë novels. I make no claim to be a special student of the Brontës. When the meetings began, I had not read a line of Anne Brontë's—despite George Moore's mischievous suggestion that she was the best novelist of the trio—nor had I read *Shirley* or *The Professor*. Nevertheless, I believe I have never come nearer to effectiveness as a teacher than in this examination of the Brontës; and I may add that I seldom enjoyed teaching so much.

I should favor the assignment of three hours in one semester in a student's senior year to the study of a special topic such as this, issuing in the preparation of a long paper; and if the time were to be doubled, I should not be a dissenter.

I shall offer one other specific sugges-

tion. There is one period in literature that we are specially bound to study with senior undergraduates; that period is the present. At the University of Toronto I received a thorough account of the development of English literature from *Beowulf* to Hardy and Yeats. All that was left out was the here and now: the here, the literature of the United States and Canada; and the now, the literature of the immediate present. As a result of the omissions, those of my classmates who have not pursued higher studies in English have either developed eccentric tastes in recent books, fallen victims to passing fads, or ossified in the conviction that nothing after 1910 or on this side of the Atlantic is really excellent. I hasten to add that at Toronto these defects have been remedied; but at many places they have not been remedied. Everywhere, no matter how scanty is the time remaining for us, I should like to see the literature of the present carefully studied. A careful study of contemporary literature gives a relevance to the literature of the past. To exclude or to slight the present from the range of prescribed studies is to evade a major responsibility and to mutilate the whole program. To sum up: The special student of English would receive special courses in Shakespeare, Chaucer, Milton, and contemporary literature, and he would prepare in weekly consultation with an instructor a careful graduating essay on a topic of real importance—not related to any of the courses mentioned. Some elective time would remain.

VI

So much for a common substance, but what of a common method or combination of methods? I believe that the most striking difference in methods of instruc-

tion between the arts and the sciences lies in our much greater dependence on the lecture system. In itself the lecture system is good in that it can achieve certain aims not otherwise to be achieved, but it is not good as the sole or even as the chief method of instruction. There are relatively few professors who are most effective as lecturers and relatively few students who learn best in the passive state of the lecturegoer. The lecture system should be accompanied by the tutorial system. I have an open mind concerning the particular form of the tutorial system which should be adopted. It will be enough to offer a very simple definition of what seems essential in the tutorial method. Each student should be sent for some hours each week to tutors; the tutors should meet their students either alone or in very small groups; a student should have as much as possible of his work with the same tutor; and in the tutorial meetings the substance of lecture courses should be sifted critically in carefully prepared papers and in close discussion.

To the tutorial method of instruction I can see only one objection of weight. It is undoubtedly expensive. But so is the laboratory method of instruction in the sciences. If the sciences still used the lecture as much as we do, I suppose that all the scientific departments of a university could be housed in one building, and probably the budget for them all would not exceed the present budget for physics. No one would dream of suggesting that we go back to the lecture method as the sole form of instruction in science; and I am certain that if once the tutorial method were introduced in the arts, no one would think it could be dispensed with. And in the history of education it has been generally true that if one method of instruction is superior to another,

it supersedes the other, and the difficulty of cost is groaned over, met, and overcome. It is said sometimes that the library is the laboratory of the humanities. I regret to say that this fine mouth-filling phrase is to me empty of all meaning. If there were hundreds of rooms in the library of a university, and if in each of these tutors were examining with their students the problems brought up in lectures, then the library would indeed begin to be the laboratory of the humanities.

VII

Will our society support such a type of education as I have recommended? I brushed aside the problem of increased cost, and I am sure I was right in doing so. Will the principle of a rigid curriculum be accepted? Such a curriculum exists in the professional schools, and there is no reason to suppose that society would censure in liberal arts colleges what it supports with respect elsewhere. There is nothing in the comprehensive examination to stir society one way or the other. The tutorial system is in keeping with the social concern for individual attention in education, and its principle would certainly arouse nothing but warm approval. I am sanguine that, just as society accepts the principle of severe limitation in numbers in medical colleges,

it will accept some increase in emphasis on the élite. Social catastrophes of the magnitude of a depression and a war leave a concern for the cultivation of leaders.

There remains but one problem. Will society accept such a content as I have outlined? This, the most important question of all, I do not think I can attempt to answer. I do not know. I strongly believe that society will not in the future accept the elective system as it has been practiced in liberal arts colleges during the past quarter-century, the cafeteria system, as the president of the University of California has recently called it. For the elective system is a form of anarchy, and by its very nature a society must be hostile to anarchy, since the victory of anarchy is the downfall of society. Since the liberal arts colleges are, I think, doomed to lose much of their strength unless a rigid curriculum is adopted, I believe that experiments should be made in various places with various rigid curricula, and, of these, I believe that one or more will be both effective and socially acceptable. If we set our houses in order with that celerity and decisiveness for which we are not noted, we may have a future almost as bright as the brightest moments in our past.

The "Book-of-Readings" Problem

LOUISE E. RORABACHER¹

IN MARCH, 1944, Professor Parry pleaded in *College English* for better anthologies for the English survey course; I wish to voice a growing dissatisfaction with another tool of the trade—namely, the "book of readings" customarily used in the required beginning course in freshman English. Here the difficulty lies, it seems to me, not so much in carelessness or inadequacy on the part of editors and publishers as in a general failure to define such a book in terms of the recognized objectives of the course.

My attention was drawn sharply to the problem early in my teaching career, which began in a large state university where the beginning course in rhetoric was provided with a calendar of assignments set up by the department. On the day that the director of the course chose to visit my class, the scheduled assignment was a selection from the book of readings—"The Idea of Progress," by Dean Inge. This essay occupied better than twenty pages of fine print, filled with allusions to be explained, quotations to be translated, and weighty ideas to be understood and applied. Having perspired my own way through it with true graduate-school thoroughness, I exhausted myself in an effort to drag my freshmen along the same path; and, as the hour ended, I had the satisfaction of feeling that some of them, at least, had gotten a brief glimpse into the intellectual realm where Inge had moved with such ease.

Later, however, my visitor's one comment was, "But what about rhetoric?"—a question so pertinent that I yearned to throw it back at him as the one responsible for the assignment! Instead, however, I have kept repeating it to myself, year after year, as I have attempted to teach my way through numerous and varied books of readings designed for use in the required beginning course.

The term "English" in the modern college curriculum covers a multitude of activities, from philology to playshop; but the course required of entering freshmen has come to be recognized pretty generally as a service course in composition. As such, it usually includes three activities: the writing of themes, the study of a handbook, and the reading of selections. As higher education has become more and more democratic, with the attendant increase in quantity and decrease in quality of student which has been so marked in the past few decades, each of these activities has been subject to criticism and change.

As for themes, the instructor who used to come fresh from advanced courses in "creative writing" to demand of entering seventeen-year-old farm boys an hour's exposition on "My Idea of Heaven" or "A Trip to the Moon" has generally seen the error of his ways—after the first few sets—and now assigns such topics as "How To Build a Model Airplane" or "My Prize Calf." For the needs of the "average students" (whose numbers, like those of the common people, prove

¹ Department of English, Purdue University.

the Lord's love) can, it has been discovered, better be served by practical exercises in the expression of their own experiences than by too severe demands on their scant imaginative powers.

As for handbooks, recent years have seen a complete break with the old Lindley Murray tradition; and the folly of attempting to build English grammar upon a Latin background which is no longer standard student equipment, or of teaching grammar for grammar's own sweet sake, has largely disappeared. The market is now overflowing with good usable textbooks whose scope is limited to functional grammar.

As for readings, the market is no less full of books of selections intended for use in the beginning composition course. But here, I contend, too little attempt has been made to meet present needs. These books may serve very well the requirements of those much-sought-after but rare students who, being already equipped with a fair verbal facility, need only inspiring reading to direct them into creative writing. But what of those great masses of average and below-average classes which remain after the cream has been (as it now is, in many institutions, by one or another plan of sectioning) skimmed off? These are the groups who must struggle mightily for mere accuracy and clearness; and their needs are surely great enough, numerically alone, to merit the publication of books planned specifically for them.

The collections of readings now available are chiefly of two types, which I shall call the old and the new. The "old" are so in name only, as they continue to appear regularly, with new covers and titles. But the tradition behind them is an old one, calling for a collection of standard prose pieces from classics proved down through the long course of

literary history. They persist in the happy assumption that the student who has been coaxed through Arnold's "Sweetness and Light" will, *ipso facto*, produce a better five-hundred-word theme on "My Hobby" the following Friday. This result, however, is too seldom apparent, and the harried instructor whom circumstance compels to continue such a program finds his course tending to break up into alternate assignments in "literature" and "composition," with little discernible interrelationship.

Rebellion against such a fruitless procedure has been largely responsible for the "new" type of collection, which is appearing in ever increasing numbers these days. "Give the student fresh, new, hot-off-the-press prose," is the watchword, to which has been added, particularly since Pearl Harbor, "Give him material through which he may learn of his neglected American backgrounds." The results represent a sharp break from the old "literary" tradition, certainly; in fact, interesting though they may be as social studies, they often remind the instructor in search of some solid meat for his class's mental sustenance of the old saying that "All is not literature that litters."

Surely, in order that we may demand of editors and publishers a type of book more practicable than either of these, we need to give serious thought to what part the readings are expected to play in the beginning course. The main objective of the standard service course is, we must remember, proficiency in composition rather than literature, the study of which may well be delayed, as such, until later courses devoted solely to it. In the composition course itself, however, literary selections can serve two very useful ends: as models of form and as motivation through content.

What, then, do we require as models of form? The freshman course in composition, being directed, in most institutions, toward practical rather than artistic ends, is primarily concerned with the writing of exposition. This fact was particularly true of the very utilitarian type of training set up by the military programs; yet more than one group of instructors found themselves embarrassed with a book of readings which they had chosen, in an excess of patriotic fervor, for its American backgrounds, and which proved to be made up chiefly of narrative and descriptive bits, delightful to read, but incapable of being taught as models of the expository prose which the student was expected to write.

On the other hand, those adopting one of what I have called the "old" style of collection are equally handicapped: its treasured selections are as far beyond the comprehension or imitation of today's average college student stylistically as they exceed in length any papers he is likely to be called upon to write.

As models for the customary short weekly theme, then, they fail. What of the second purpose for which the book of readings should be chosen—motivation? The value of these ponderous essays as a basis for intellectual exercise is incalculable; yet, with no desire to discount the worth of such exercise in a liberal education, I contend that there is little time or place for it in the beginning course required of all but the greatly superior student. Every experienced instructor knows how many class hours must be devoted, in the average required course, to drill in the mere decencies of grammar, punctuation, and even spelling; how little time is left for the provocative discussions of the kind of course he would prefer to be teaching, but for which few of his students are adequately prepared.

In despair, he is likely to banish the book of readings from the roster of required texts as being too impractical to justify its own existence. He may come, instead, to depend on good student papers, saved from term to term, as models for writing assignments (some large departments mimeograph or print the best of such materials, gathered from the entire staff, for the use of all). Or he may have his students subscribe to some magazine, for the motivation of current prose. Either of these substitutes for the conventional readings has the advantage of providing fresh, teachable material; but both have obvious disadvantages, notably for the instructor who likes to be able to predict his teaching materials for the purpose of planning a well-organized course in advance.

Surely the "book of readings" is still the unique answer to a pressing need in the required composition course. But just as surely, if it is to survive, it must join the handbooks in keeping pace with the changing requirements which it is destined to fulfil. What, then, shall we ask of a book of selections if it is to satisfy present demands?

Since required composition is, today, directed toward practical rather than artistic ends, let our new book contain selections that are primarily expository in purpose, even though we lose those charming collections of poetry and prose so dear to the literary-minded. Since these selections are to serve as models for student writing, let them be of only such length and difficulty as are conceivably within the student grasp, even though we lose many a noble essay dear to the graduate-school-trained instructor. Since they are to motivate the writing of the average freshman, let them deal, in the main, with current and provocative subjects, even while avoiding the too evanescent and the merely shal-

low. And if, atop all this, literary excellence be too much to ask, let the editors give us at least literary competence, eschewing alike the slipshod and the glib.

Such a compilation is surely no mere utopian dream but a possibility which,

if realized, would be a highly practicable and even respectable collection: a blessing to the student, a relief to the instructor, and (if I correctly interpret the extent of the need) a gold mine for the editor and the publisher.

The Science of Man

JOSEPH E. BAKER¹

I

THE first paper in the first number of *Etc.: A Review of General Semantics* is entitled "Science and Values"; and it is introduced with this note by Alfred Korzybski:

The following paper by Professor Edward L. Thorndike, originally delivered in St. Louis, December 30, 1935, on the occasion of his retirement from the presidency of the American Association for the Advancement of Science is perhaps the best that could have been selected as an introduction to ETC. . . . This presidential address is perhaps the most striking compact summary of his long constructive scientific career. From the point of view of general semantics there is very little, if anything, I can add or reformulate, besides endorsing practically sentence after sentence as they stand. Here we find outlined, in fact, the very problems we have been dealing with in practice through the formulation and application of a non-aristotelian system for many years. Professor Thorndike rightly asks that scientific methods should be applied to human evaluations . . . [paper is reprinted . . . from *Science*, January 3, 1936].

Thorndike's paper concludes: The world needs sages, dreamers, leaders in business, etc.; "but it also needs scientific methods to test the worth of the prophets' dreams, and scientific humanists to inform and advise its men of affairs and to advise them not only about what is, but about what is right and good." He has argued that "judgments of value are simply one sort of judgments of fact, dis-

tinguished from the rest by two characteristics: They concern consequences. These are consequences to the wants of sentient beings." He condemns "ethics, politics and philanthropy" for "the retention of theological and sentimental prejudices in favor of the similarity and equality of man. No egalitarian system of weights can be just or wise. More weight should be given to the wants of superior men than to the wants of inferior men." (He continually weights the evaluation of consequences in this way, without once realizing that he is begging the question by using, undefined, such terms as "bad men." This lecture was delivered shortly after a very able man, Adolf Hitler, came to power by saying something very like what I have just quoted.)

What able and good men want is much more likely to be better for their community or nation or race or the world as a whole than what stupid and bad men want. . . . It also seems at least possible that the ruthlessness and selfishness of some men of genius in business and government would have been reduced if they had been given power more and been less required to extort it by force. Even if these creators continue to seek occasionally eccentric, ignoble or ruthless satisfactions, it will still be an excellent bargain for the world to attach great weight to their wants as a whole. The world's greatest folly has been its treatment of those who are most superior to it in intellect, originality, sensitiveness. . . . One good clue to what they need is what they themselves desire.

¹ Assistant professor of English, University of Iowa.

So Thorndike continues. He takes as his examples of "sciences of man" the studies known as anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics, government. Using a "scientific" method, he reports "what the inhabitants of this country want":

By the aid of a consensus of psychologists, I have divided each item of our people's expenses among the wants to which it probably ministers . . . this inventory of wants satisfied from income is at least a step in the right direction. . . . Our bill for clothes is spent (according to the psychologist's distribution): 41 per cent. for protection against cold, heat and wet; 6½ per cent. for protection against animals and disease; 12½ per cent. for approval of others; 7 per cent. for self-approval; 10 per cent. to gain pleasure in courtship and sex activities; 8 per cent. for other social intercourse; 6 per cent. for pleasures of vision; 3½ per cent. to win mastery or domination over others, and 2 per cent. to win their affection. The 700 million dollars for cosmetics and beauty parlors is spent about one seventh for the pleasures of sight and smell, one fourth for the pleasures of sex and courtship. . . .

The last half of this last quotation—every item in it—ought to be read while reading Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. Then can any honest lover of the truth claim that this pseudo-scientific approach is "a step in the right direction"? Has any Aristotelian ever been so ignorant of human nature and human values as to make the fatuous statement about what "able men" want—the last dregs of romantic hero-worship? Was Jefferson's insight into values mere "theological and sentimental prejudices," or does Jefferson tell us, perhaps better than psychological data, "what the inhabitants of this country want"?

Why should the "scientific" approach to the study of man lead to such absurdities? Contrast the profound truths often expressed by a theologian like Reinhold Niebuhr and ascribed by him to biblical revelation—for example, that on every

new level of intellectual achievement man is capable of new and more devastating acts of pride. But I am not going to defend, in this essay, the view that we must learn the truth from divine revelation or from the other two methods rejected by Thorndike at the end of his address when he says: "Are there any valid reasons why the methods of science should be abandoned in favor of either philosophical arguments or intuitional conclusions when one passes from facts of existence to facts of value?" I am going to admit that we need to study the "facts of value" and that we need "sciences of man." But it is not safe to call them "sciences" lest we be tripped into some of the absurdities that Thorndike and Korzybski have so owlishly indorsed. If we seriously desire knowledge about human values and find that we cannot depend on Thorndike's "scientific" method to teach us what we want to know, must we abandon the scientific spirit just when we touch the important questions? Must we admit that it is impossible to have a rational study of mankind?

II

We should not despair. Let us ascend the scale of the sciences, beginning with the most exact, those which deal with the least-human aspects of the universe. The mathematical and physical sciences, as distinguished from biology, make statements which, within their frame of reference, are true without exception. For example, Newton's Second Law of Motion: *The rate of change of momentum is proportional to the applied force and is in the direction of that force* ($F = kma$). Newton could have made the prediction that no one in the twentieth century will ever find that a calf has been born which does not obey this law. But we may read in the paper tomorrow of the birth of a

two-headed calf, in spite of what zoölogy can tell us about the bovine young. Most of the knowledge that biology has to offer us is subject to exceptions. Monsters do occur. Not all kangaroos are born in Australia. As we move from physics and chemistry to biology, as we move from force and matter to life, we have moved up toward human values (for a life, as such, can have value). In biology some of our knowledge concerns the history of species, a series of events not subject to laboratory experiment. The facts themselves change in the course of evolution. Nevertheless, this knowledge is verifiable by methods peculiar to its own problems, and no sane person is now so absurd as to deny that it is scientific. Many of the facts about the human mind (individually and socially) are within the range of this kind of biological accuracy, and to that extent psychology and the social studies give us scientific knowledge about man.

But Thorndike's statistics on "what the inhabitants of this country want" are pseudo-scientific pretense to knowledge. If we wish to read something more reliable about "pleasures of sight" *versus* "pleasures of sex" in relation to cosmetics or about the use of clothes for "self-approval" *versus* "to win affection," we should turn to *Antony and Cleopatra*, or *Romeo and Juliet*, or *Much Ado about Nothing*. Thorndike might have learned more from Shakespeare than from his "consensus of psychologists" concerning what the inhabitants of America want, for Shakespeare, like the true scientist, was dealing with something universal. For his own subject, he is closer to the truth than the statisticians are. We have all heard students say that some course in psychology or sociology was made up of "platitudes and lies." Now I realize how unjust this is; but it is a nemesis

these "disciplines" have brought upon themselves by their *hybris*, which may be defined as "overweening self-confidence." Many of their generalizations are true just often enough to be obvious—hence platitudes—but not often enough to be as scientific as they pretend to be—hence lies. But what does psychology know of *hybris*? To learn about that we go to Greek tragedy. And if the psychologist asks me, "What does anyone know, scientifically, about *hybris*?" the psychologist is right. Even a psychologist who, like Thorndike, is exemplifying *hybris*, cannot know it by his scientific methods. And that is precisely my point. Suppose we say: "The Law for Man (or 'The Moral Laws of Human Nature') will punish overweening self-confidence—its consequences to the wants of sentient beings will be undesirable." But the opposite is also true. For who can deny the truth of Job's observation, "The earth is given into the hand of the wicked"? Psychology and sociology have not yet caught up with Job and Sophocles because science is embarrassed if it tries to state two opposite truths. Perhaps we should say that neither of these is *the* truth but that both of them *have* truth. And the latter is what we mean, usually, when we say, "How true!" I do not want to call them half-truths, for this suggests the generalization, "The earth is given into the hands of the wicked—and the good" or "Moral Law will halfway punish *hybris*." Either of these "half-truths" misses the point wholly. There are no half-tragedies.

Some social scientists will think they have me here and will pounce upon me with the "philosophical" argument that if these two "truths" cancel each other, we might as well be ignorant of both. As one chemist has put it, "Why waste time reading old authors?" But, curiously

enough, ignorance is not equivalent to knowledge. The wise man knows the truth of many contradictory observations. Would the chemist say that we should never learn the habitat of Australian mammals merely because some kangaroos are born on the other side of the Wallace Line? For a generalization in the humanities there may be so many exceptions as to justify a contradictory generalization. Different branches of learning should aim to achieve different kinds of accuracy. When sociologists—or literary critics—construct fake mathematical formulas, they do not raise, but lower, the dignity of their subjects. Only mathematical truths can honestly be stated mathematically. The biologists know this, but some students of the human mind have not yet learned it. Human truth must be stated humanly, or not at all; anything else is falsification. Since man is capable of laughter, his nature cannot be dealt with in a style incapable of humor. You may find a laboratory psychologist who bitterly resents this, for it means that all his insight can go for naught if he does not have the linguistic skill of the great masters of expression, the poets. It is the scarcity of ability to write adequately about humanity that forces the seeker of humanistic knowledge to range more widely, looking for books to read. Dozens of scientific textbooks written last year are adequate for their job. But in all the world there have not been enough gifted writers during the twentieth century to make “contemporary literature” a serious rival to that of Periclean Athens or Elizabethan London, for the young American who wishes to learn the truth about human nature, its potentialities, its values. Love and marriage have been discussed so well in drama and poetry that a textbook on the subject is obvi-

ously as inappropriate as a versified algebra.

One truth may be truer than another without canceling it. Machiavelli is a realist, and if we shut our eyes to his advice we shall suffer; but Jefferson is *more* true to reality—potential human reality. See where Mussolini got by shutting his eyes to Jefferson and the “prejudices in favor of the similarity and equality of man” so loftily scorned by the president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1935, in that address so much admired by Korzybski in 1943! Science in this sense can never replace political “science,” where the word is used in the older sense of *any knowledge*—in this case made up largely of political literature and political history, past and present. We simply cannot get the force of Machiavelli, or of Jefferson, in a textbook summary. A professional scholar can, of course, extract something from anything he can read, even the prose of his colleagues. But it takes a great writer to communicate to the average reader, in works “not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion.” Much recent “educational” discussion has ignored the plain fact that it is precisely the great classics which *can* be read with profit and enjoyment by the unlearned.

If we may judge from the learned and critical periodicals published by universities and colleges, the aim of the psychology and social science departments is sounder than the aim of the literature departments. We should seek to know, and teach, all we can about man. But the unliterary “social” departments have spawned much pseudo-science, pretentiously claiming for its generalizations a universal validity that is possible only on the level of the natural sciences. Humanity is richly various. Whatever can

be said about man, and said truly, is well worth knowing. It will cover many instances—but not necessarily all. And we falsify our picture of man if all we learn about him is written, as textbooks are written, without any feeling of tragedy or heroism or prophetic zeal, and without any sense of humor. Pseudo-science cannot tell us that man is the “glory, jest, and riddle of the world.” Would Thorndike’s “consensus of psychologists” try to say 7 per cent glory, $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent jest, and no riddle at all after the methods of science are applied to the subject for a few more years? “Sole judge of truth—in endless error hurled!” Science cannot allow for endless error; literature can.

III

The secret of literature’s success as the “science of man” does not lie merely in the command of style, but, at best, in its indirect method—a method adapted to its own branch of knowledge. (In the humanities, properly studied, the subject to be known is not books but humanity. The humanist uses literature as the botanist uses a microscope, as an *instrument* for the advancement of learning.) Even when poorly translated, lacking style entirely, Job and the plays of Sophocles communicate human truths very effectively. They do not offer any systematic formulation. Job is discussing his situation in passionate outbursts, not all of them consistent with each other. His friends argue with him, and so does God. Elsewhere he expresses faith in God’s justice. Sophocles is saying: To one man, Oedipus of Thebes, this happened.

“Judgments of values”—analysis of “consequences to the wants of sentient beings”—can be set forth in fiction or dialogue *as if* what is said is not necessarily true. And that is best. As biology

allows some exceptions, fiction allows all exceptions. Human experience is so various that the truth about it—by far the most important truth we can learn—continues to be told in fiction, generation after generation. And so it will continue to be told. If we cannot believe in the probability of a story, we may still enjoy the fiction, as fancy, pretty, or grotesque. But unless it seems “true to life,” we do not consider it very fine, very weighty. In literature, beauty is truth and truth, beauty. And that is not all we need to know, for this truth must also be good—that is, true to the “facts of values.” As Carlyle puts it, “all real ‘Art’ is definable as Fact, or say as the disimprisoned ‘Soul of Fact.’” But then Carlyle goes on to make a grave mistake: “Fiction—my friend, you will be surprised to discover at last what alarming cousinship it has to Lying: don’t go into Fiction.” Francis Bacon speaks of lies that “make for pleasure, as with poets.” But fiction is not a lie. Quite the contrary. Fiction does not claim to be *more* true than it is; fiction makes *less* claim to truth than it has a right to. Everyone—except perhaps Bacon—would know that Shakespeare is not merely telling about one Marcus Antonius and a certain queen he knew. That study of passion has universal applications.

The fiction-writer, playwright, epic poet, ballad-singer, do not force their generalizations upon us. Like the genuine scientist, they are humble. But Thorndike was not humble. A Marxist like John Strachey, coming to America to offer us, he said, the “science” of society, was not humble. The Nazis with their “scientific” reduction of man to nature are not humble. Fiction allows the utmost freedom to the press, places the highest faith in the individual’s free judgment, makes no bid to be acknowl-

edged as a legislator. Jesus telling a parable is the complete opposite of the "expert" telling us that, since he is in possession of a new scientific system which at last gives all the answers to human problems, he is going to rule us, or else . . . ! "A *certain* man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves. . . ."

Fiction—at its best written in verse and acted out—has an important function; not the relating of what has happened but of what can happen, probably or necessarily. Dramatic fiction, in adequate style, therefore has a higher truth and a higher seriousness, for it expresses the universal. By universal we mean how a person of a certain type will, on occasion, probably or necessarily act and what he will be likely to say. Literature can best convey this (not by formula or by a verifiable photograph of phenomena at one time and place, but) by creating an imitation of human actions—social and psychological. There is a profound pleasure in such imitation, deeply grounded in the instincts of human nature. That is one of the reasons for literature. To learn gives the liveliest pleasure, not only to philosophers but to men in general. Yes, in this paragraph I have been translating Aristotle. In the "sciences of man," Aristotle may still be what he was called by Dante, "the Master of those who know."

APPENDIX

The following passages from *Manhood of Humanity* (1921) by Alfred Korzybski, the high priest of General Semantics, will illustrate the spirit of the pseudo-scientists, whose ideas are often allowed to pass unchallenged as if they replaced all the wisdom of Western culture. Indeed, they claim no less.

The Preface begins:

This book is primarily a study of Man and ultimately embraces all the great qualities and problems of Man. As a study of Man it takes into consideration *all* the characteristics which make Man what he is . . . an effort has been made to approach the problem of Man from a scientific-mathematical point of view. . . . If we succeed in finding the laws of human nature, all the rest will be a comparatively easy task—the ethical, social, economic and political status of Man should be in accord with the laws of his nature . . . we have, first of all, to know what Man is.

The first chapter begins: "It is the aim of this little book to point the way to a new science and art—the science and art of Human Engineering." At the end he tells us that "in humanity's manhood" affairs will be guided by "Human Engineering—not by ignorant and grafting 'politicians'—but by scientific men. . . . How is the thing to be done? . . . A natural first step would probably be the establishment of a new institution which might be called a Dynamic Department—Department of Coordination or a Department of Cooperation—the name is of little importance [Is he trying to say *Gleichschaltung*?], but it would be the *nucleus* of the new civilization." There would be a bureau for "the development of human engineering and mathematical sociology or humanology," another of *Mathematical Legislation* "to recommend legislation, to provide means for eliminating 'Legalism' from the theory and practice of law, and to bring jurisprudence into accord with the laws of time-binding human nature," and an *Educational Section* to "elaborate educational projects and revise school methods and books; their decisions being subject to the approval of the joint sessions of sections" so far listed, made up, all together, of two sociologists, one biologist, three mechanical engineers, three mathematicians, one lawyer, and "two or three teachers."

Even more revealing, perhaps, is chapter viii, which asks, as to the first World War:

Why did Germany display more power than any other single nation? Because in the establishment of her "ethics," her political system [etc.], Germany availed herself, in larger measure than any other nation, of scientific achievements and scientific methods. . . . It is possibly a fault of the writer's military training, but it seems to him that the "General Staff" point of view has as much claim to consideration as any other among the many different interpretations of history—perhaps it has more. . . . Germany affords the first example of a philosophy or a society having for its main purpose the generating of power to "do things." It seems only reasonable and intelligent to analyze the history of the war from the engineer's point of view, which, in this case, happens to coincide with the military point of view.

In what follows he expresses his enthusiasm for a totalitarian ideal.

Mathematical and mechanical methods are the only ones by which power can be built. Hegel in 1805 lectured on history of philosophy, pure mathematics and natural law. It would be hard to find a better combination for a philosophy of power. That is precisely what this philosophy was. It influenced not only German philosophy but even German theology, and through these channels it sank deep into the national consciousness. . . . The German understanding of the great value of technology directly applied that principle ["Do not waste energy"] to their philosophy, law, ethics, politics, and so on. . . .

A state is the governing center of an accumulation of human beings—of time-binding powers. . . . If they are to be united so as to constitute a whole, they must be given a common aim; they must, so to speak, be reduced to a common base. . . . [Then he expresses this by adding exponents as in logarithms!] Germany united the powers of living men and women and children; it gave them a common base; it gave them one common "social" mood

and aim; they all became consolidated in service of that which is called the State; they studied and taught for the State; they worked, lived and died for the State: the State was their idol, King and God. Such was the aim of German philosophy, theology, law and science. The establishment of ONE AIM for all was the decisive factor. It is obvious that if we want to inspire 60 Millions of individuals with one aim, this aim cannot be private or personal. . . . The fatal error of German political philosophy was . . . her aim was too low—too narrow—the welfare of a state instead of the welfare of Humanity. . . . That which is of interest is the impersonal fact that what was the *strength* and *power* of Germany is the best possible illustration we have had of what science and a sort of mathematical philosophy are able to accomplish, even when directed, not to the welfare of Humanity, but to that of a relatively small group of people.

And in 1941, the second edition of Korzybski's *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics* (chap. i) begins: "The present enquiry originated in my attempt to build a science of man. The first task was to define man in non-elementalistic, functional terms. I accomplished that in my book *Manhood of Humanity*."

By the time he wrote *Science and Sanity*, Korzybski realized that his theories about man announced the appearance of a "new man" just as Einstein, the only living man he could be compared with, announced the appearance of a new science. Between the two of them, he indicates, they have cast Newton, Euclid, and Aristotle entirely in the shade. Korzybski stepped forth as the anti-Aristotle and immediately, therefore, won for himself a cult following among our intelligentsia.

The Humanities in Engineering Colleges

BOYD GUEST¹

IN HIS article entitled "Freshman English Responsibilities in Engineering Colleges," in *College English*, April, 1943, William S. Lynch very lucidly called attention to the fact that engineers had at long last begun to bestir themselves concerning cultural education. One may quite readily agree with Mr. Lynch that, by the very nature of the limitations imposed upon engineering curriculums in the past, freshman English has been about the only existing medium through which the student early in his career may become familiar with the humanities.

However, it now appears likely that there may be further development in liberalizing engineering curriculums. The Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education in 1944 reaffirmed its earlier contention that fully 25 per cent of any engineering curriculum be devoted to humanistic-social studies.² This recent and more vigorous support for humanities has no doubt partly resulted from the continued able support of Dr. William E. Wickenden, president of the Case School of Applied Science. In an address delivered at the general session of the Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities on October 29, 1942, Dr. Wickenden stated that he believed that it is almost inevitable that the technological stem of education will be the predominant one after the war.³ Cer-

tainly technical warfare has done much to emphasize the productive value of technocracy. But by the same token ethically uncontrolled technocracy has been civilization's most ruthless, destructive agency. Dr. Wickenden's principal thesis, and apparently a sound one, is that since the world needs more well-balanced, humanistically trained college students, and since more and more college students will pursue technological professions, there must be greater co-ordination of the two stems of education.

Now, if one divides the two stems at any arbitrary percentage point (for example, 75 per cent technical skills and 25 per cent humanistic-social education), it is quite important that the established ratio be not too greatly encroached upon. For example, Dr. Wickenden wisely classifies language (English and foreign languages as mere tools of communication, which involves composition, rhetoric, punctuation, diction, spelling, etc.) as a tool or skill which underlies engineering effort.⁴ Too, Mr. Lynch has aptly observed that Engineering English is blasphemous and that "the writing of technical reports belongs in the technical laboratory."⁵ English teachers will hasten to concur with such opinion, but it is doubtful if many will follow Mr. Lynch in employing the utilitarian value

¹ Chairman of the Department of English, University of Missouri Schools of Mines and Metallurgy.

² *Proceedings of the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education*, XLVIII (1941), 189.

³ "Adjustments That Should Be Made in the Engineering Curricula for the War and Post-war Periods," *Bulletin of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 1 (November, 1942).

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵ *College English*, April, 1943, p. 432.

of humanistic-social studies as the first and chief means of motivation.⁶ If the engineer desires courses in humanities, it is not wise for English teachers to compromise with mere utility almost at the point of an initial victory for the humanities. In the past the instructors in technology have in a narrow sense been immensely successful; teachers of the humanities in engineering colleges have not been so successful. No doubt, part of this failure can be attributed to communication deficiencies of the student and to the intensified program which makes the student so technically skilled. The ultimate aim is not one of antagonism to limit the technically skilled individual but rather to supplement those skills with a realization of broader humanistic values. It appears that much of the failure of the current humanities program is occasioned by the absence of an integrated humanistic-social program of study.

Such integration is rendered more difficult because of the high degree of departmentalizing employed even in small colleges in America. In order to unify a program in humanities and to give it more significance, such departments as English, speech, history, sociology, economics, philosophy, psychology, and foreign languages might be con-

solidated under a Department of Humanities. Freshman English and elementary courses in foreign languages should be conducted by this department as linguistic background for all stems of education. All other courses within the department—some required and some elective—should be classified as having humanistic-social content. A typical course of study offered by such department might include, among others, "World Literature," "American Civilization," "The Literature of Ideas," "Economic History of the United States," "Principles of Economic and Human Geography," "Principles of Economics," "Twentieth-Century World History," "Principles and Problems of Philosophy," "Shakespeare," "American Literature," "English Literature," "Introduction to History," "History of Latin America," "Economic Foreign Policy of the United States," "Modern Drama," "Modern Poetry," "Sociology," etc.

The proper integration of the humanities will show quite clearly, and without aiming specifically at the utilitarian, the interrelationship of science and technocracy, on the one hand, and habits of thought and human relationships, on the other. The result will be that the technically skilled man will become proficient in the significant sphere of cultural human relations.

REFLECTIONS ON *HAMLET*

GEORGE BRANDON SAUL¹

*Dark moons control our tides; the very truth
Of human character is never known,
Splash all the ink we may and analyze
Whatever motives seem implicit in
Background and blood. I have seen the
apparent best*

*Go down in murk and shine again in rain.
So let the pedants and psychologists
Unwind their feeble horns: the fiery stag
Is still elusive on uncaptured hills,
Belling defiance—aye, and mockery.*

¹ Professor of English, University of Connecticut.

Reconstruction for Humpty Dumpty: The Comparative Concept in Literary Study¹

HAROLD R. WALLEY²

AS THE greatest catastrophe of modern times moves into its final stages, that part of the civilized world which can give thought to the fruits of survival turns more and more to the problems of reconversion from an economy of war to an economy of peace. This reconversion is not merely a matter of jobs for a resurgent prosperity but of ideals for a new life. It is a hopeful augury not only that industry is concerning itself with the future but that colleges and universities throughout the land have been devoting earnest thought and effort to plans for a more effective education in the postwar world. If swords once more are to be reconverted into plowshares, the time for retooling is now.

In this process of reconversion those of us who are engaged in the teaching of literature confront a most serious problem the nature of which precludes any delusion that success can attend an easy return to simple pre-war ways. In the future we shall have to confront a generation tempered in the fire of warfare and taught in the grim school of death what things are essential to life. Already the return of servicemen to the classroom is revealing a new toughness of mind and an impatience with facile cant. Moreover, we shall confront a generation which has learned the value of serious

study. This has been a war of trained technicians. Men and women have learned to read. Books have poured into camp libraries and U.S.O. centers and have traveled in the mails to servicemen all over the world. Specially printed service editions have carried books to a dozen fronts along with other munitions. And the Armed Forces Institute has extended the classroom to the foxhole.

Yet paradoxically, in spite of this promulgation of reading, in our war training the formal study of literature has received no priority, and the teaching of literature is officially nonessential to the war effort. Were this condition but a temporary expedient, one might pass over it as a pardonable oversight in the heat of conflict; but that it reflects a more enduring conviction, with important implications for both peace and war, becomes increasingly clear from any dispassionate view of the evidence. For in its less formal social contexts literature has become less a thing of beauty and a joy forever than an incidental diversion for idle hours or a convenient pretext for afternoon gossip over appropriate refreshments. In the formal ritual of college curriculums it becomes increasingly either an ambiguous luxury to be indulged in wavering faith and in diminishing quantity or an esoteric addiction of the economically impractical. Even the very teachers of literature themselves reveal an increasing uncertainty about their function and a disposition to treat

¹ This article embraces the substance of a talk delivered at the thirty-fourth annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English in Columbus, Ohio, on November 24, 1944.

² Professor of English, Ohio State University.

their subject either as an extraneous social ornament or as an intermediate means toward more profitable ends. If these be evidences of a fundamental truth about literature, then that truth can only be that literature has no vital role to play in the postwar world. But if they be the manifestations of a fundamental misconception, it is well for teachers of literature to recognize that they are not guiltless of fostering the misconception.

That confusion of purpose exists among the various devotees of literature is evidenced by the unfortunate cleavages which during the past few decades have created discord within their ranks. It is, one hopes, but a cynical witticism that those who can, do, and those who cannot, teach; nevertheless, it is a fact that only too often the creators of literature and its expositors have had little in common. Moreover, professional critics of literature and academic scholars have looked down their noses at each other while addressing themselves to divergent interests and audiences and quarantining their opinions in carefully segregated periodicals. College teachers and research specialists, in the reciprocity of mutual suspicion, if not mutual scorn, have sought sanctuary in exclusive associations for the embalming of their peculiar heresies without the contamination of alien rites. Among undergraduate students the so-called "literary major" is set apart from his fellows by an intellectual caste mark. And the formal disciple of literature treads different paths from those of the great public, whose readers fare upon digests and travel by *Saturday Evening Post*. The whole condition is one of separatism, of dissociation into irrelevant antagonisms.

The separatism within literature, however, is but a symptom of that larger

disintegration which has attended upon the modern reverence for specialization. The expanding vistas of human knowledge have revealed such an embarrassment of riches that the need for authoritative comprehension has been met only at the expense of a constantly contracting focus of vision. In this chemistry of secession the humanities have been gradually isolated from the natural sciences, the arts from the social sciences, literature from its kindred arts, English from other languages and literatures, literature from language, and, more recently, the literature of the American scene from that of the English tradition. Even within the confines of one language and literature a single epoch, like the Renaissance, secludes itself from its neighbors, to divide, amoeba-like, into such partitions as the Elizabethan drama, and yet again into the further atomies of the works of Shakespeare or Jonson or Marlowe. Fragmentation reigns in an ever narrowing compass and an increasing concentration upon the detail until at last the concentration becomes peripheral, and the detail loses identity with the total design.

Now, the motive behind the practice and the laudability of the intention are clear enough, but the consequences for literature have been lamentable. Humpty Dumpty, who once regally surveyed the world of man's common humanity from the eminence of his lofty wall, has toppled ingloriously from his perch and, in the sprawling plunge, has come apart at the seams. If it be true that not all the king's horses and all the king's men can put Humpty Dumpty together again, then it is certain that his serviceability has suffered permanent damage. To the notion that he cannot be effectively repaired, however, one may object, with Hamlet, "Nay, that does not follow."

For the sake of mankind Humpty Dumpty can, and must, be put together again. But the task of reconstruction does not mean a crude substitution of the haphazard cement and varnish of genteel superficiality for the fragmentation of the specialist. It demands the development of a welding process of sane and vital specialization which is adapted to the structure and substance of Humpty Dumpty himself.

Before the study of literature can be restored to its legitimate academic role, certain basic misapprehensions about its nature and function demand correction. Primarily, it must be recognized that literature does not exist as an analytical process, which operates upon an independent body of subject material, and which gains in effectiveness by reducing the complex of that subject matter into its component elements. Indeed, literature possesses no distinctive subject matter of its own; its content is the whole, or any part, of human experience held suspended in the solution of man's total humanity. Its peculiar virtue is its existence as a mode of illuminating and intensifying the import of that experience. Essentially literature is an art of synthetic integration, whereby the dispersed fragments of human experience coalesce into a comprehensible design, and whereof the whole is always something more than a simple sum of the parts. To segregate literature, therefore, from the multiplicity of human concerns is to destroy the source of its vitality and to deprive it of its reason for existence.

Furthermore, it must be remembered that literature, as a mode of integrated presentation and interpretation, finds its natural association with those other creative arts whereby man endeavors to give deliberate constructive meaning to his experiences. It is thus not an instrument subservient to those experiences but a

formative design superimposed upon them. Within the differentials of its distinctive medium, literature shares common purposes and methods with music, painting, and sculpture. Only in the light of these affinities can one finally perceive the full validity of its artistic function; for the individual validity of literature is inseparable from the general validity of all those arts which find creative significance in order and design.

And, finally, it must be understood that literature constitutes not primarily a scientific rationale but an act of faith—an act of faith in man's powers of perception and comprehension. As such, it is a reflection of man's will to believe and a part of man's evidence of things unseen. Like the other arts, it finds natural affiliations with man's religious impulses. In its most characteristic expression it is largely indistinguishable from that comprehensive synthesis of life's total meaning which constitutes man's personal philosophy.

The bearing of these basic facts upon the formal study of literature should be unmistakable. Whether as interpretation for undergraduates or as the training of graduate students for ultimate teaching, it should be evident that effective study of literature can exist only in terms of the essential nature of literature. If literature is essentially an artistic integration and interpretation of relative human values, the subordination of it to general social study is simply a denial of its nature and an abolition of its identity. By the same token any isolation of literature from the remainder of human life provides no more than an autopsy. Pure literature has the purity of a vacuum. The study of literature, in order to have any validity, necessarily implies an approach which is both comparative and comprehensive.

In terms of the application to grad-

uate study, it must be borne in mind that graduate training is in large measure designed for those who, as teachers or commentators, are to become the expounders and interpreters of literature. The purpose of the training is thus to produce, not funnels through which can be poured a welter of irrelevant facts and undigested opinions, but delicately sensitized instruments for recording and interpreting the significance of a cultural mode of expression. In practice, of course, an inescapable compromise with the limitations of time necessitates both a restriction and a concentration of study.

Most profitable is that kind of restriction which concentrates upon a broadly typical literary situation, a thorough mastery of which should develop the student's ability to proceed to the independent exploration of analogous situations. To be effective, however, the representative situation selected must comprise a comprehensive cultural unit which authentically illustrates the complex relationship between literature and the culture it endeavors to express. Above all, it must avoid the type of specialization which segregates and fragments. Artificial barriers, however convenient for the construction of academic pigeonholes, must be eliminated from humane scholarship. In such a comprehensive view the accidents of language, of political boundaries, of arbitrary categories like science, economics, politics, and arts, become relatively meaningless for purposes of literature.

The portal through which the student enters upon his scholarly pilgrimage may well be that of his specialized interest, but it is important that the portal be recognized as a point of departure. Thus the student may ride upon the Pegasus of Elizabethan literature, but the world which he traverses must be that of the

Renaissance. He who knows all about Shakespeare, to the exclusion of everything else, is not likely to be a very illuminating interpreter of literature at large or, for that matter, a particularly reliable interpreter of Shakespeare himself. If a sound specialization requires a choice—and it does—it is more to the point for a student of Shakespeare to comprehend the activity of the Florentine academy, the work of Leonardo, the concerns of the *Pléiade*, and the thought of Erasmus, Rabelais, and Montaigne than it is to exhume the dubious gifts of Thomas Churchyard or the antics of Anthony Munday. In the long run, it is also probably more pertinent to the understanding of literature than a tracing of the superficial variations in poetic practice from Sidney to Swinburne.

It is true that graduate study can scarcely set up a practical goal of universal knowledge and that it must perforce proceed in terms of rigorous selection; nevertheless, the difference between sound specialization and pedantic fragmentation depends upon the nature of the selection. Man lives and creates his literature in terms of his whole world of consciousness. Neither he nor his works can be adequately interpreted in terms of less. It is time that our training of specialists in literature take this central fact into account.

The presentation of literature to the college undergraduate constitutes simply a modification of the same problem. Its solution resides in a recognition of the basic fact that the study of literature can be valid only as a component part of an integrated education. Taught in splendid isolation for its own sake or as an ambitious substitute for a miscellany of other subjects, literature either endeavors to maintain an anemic existence divorced from human realities or serves as an excuse for presumptuous amateur excur-

sions into everything under the sun but literature. Literary study performs its appropriate function best when it is conceived of as an essential part of an integrated curriculum—a part which presupposes the whole. With philosophy and the related arts it must serve as the keystone to sustain the arch of man's conscious awareness of his world.

In practice the application of this conviction means that literature must be taught in relation to man's other experiences—aesthetic, metaphysical, scientific, economic, political. For literature is the synthesis and interpretation of these experiences in terms of the human and the concrete. It means, further, that in the college curriculum literature must not attempt to usurp more than its legitimate place. Specifically, the sprawling multiplicity of literature courses must be reduced. The notion that every precious survival of writing requires individual exposition is simply an inadvertent confession of the ineffectiveness of literary study. Presumably, if the study of literature achieves its end, the student should learn to read with independent intelligence. The impulse to teach everything in literature is merely a by-product of the fallacious veneration of comprehensiveness begotten by a wrongheaded specialization. The need is, rather, for a concentration upon the nature of literature itself as a mode of human experience and upon the validity of the means whereby literature endeavors to give articulation to human consciousness. The more one concentrates upon these fundamentals of literary study, the more one inevitably makes contact with all the converging tributaries of human experience, and the more it becomes evident that the study of literature by its very nature im-

plies a comparative attitude and approach.

As we move into the future, the study of literature will be subjected to every variety of competitive pressure. Assailed by the clamor of vocational and professional demands, it will be elbowed aside as trivial and impractical. Led astray by the myopia of disintegrating specialists, it will be urged to legislate itself into impotence and, ultimately, out of existence. The generality of mankind will have no better conception of its true function than it has exhibited in the past. Meanwhile, literature itself will go on unperturbed, as it always has, asking the permission of no man but ministering to his needs and asserting his acts of faith. And, in this continued life of literature, little which we do, as teachers of literature, will make much final difference, for better or for worse.

As teachers of literature, however, we can reveal a sharper, more vital meaning in literature to an ever increasing number of people if we ourselves are willing to renounce our devotion to the inconsequential. Let us no longer deceive ourselves. The man in the street is often wiser than the specialist: he at least knows when his human needs are being served. Before we can assume the obligations of our office, we must recognize that the commonwealth of the human mind knows no boundaries of space or time. It exists in an eternal present of man's continuing and related experiences. And literature is the luminous language of that commonwealth. It is only when we take the pains to know the custom of the country and the complex kaleidoscope of its life that we can hope to comprehend its brilliant idiom and to transmit that idiom undiminished to our fellows.

The English Curriculum Study

Part I. Professional Topics

The English Curriculum Study (undertaken by N.C.T.E., as described in the March issue of *College English*) asks for facts and ideas that can be used as background for more systematic gathering of material later this year. You can furnish ideas for a book that will discuss the various problems of our profession. We have all given thought to these matters and have more or less important ideas that we would like to share with others. This is an opportunity to take part in a general discussion and to help direct the suggestions and conclusions of the eventual report, *The College Teaching of English*.

In the tentative outline of topics presented last month the first is one that we can all contribute to:

1. *Professional topics*: selection of college teachers of English; training of teachers and relation of graduate work to teaching; supervision of college courses; hiring and promotion; salaries and teaching load; departmental organization.

Treatment of these topics will doubtless require several chapters in the completed study, but the topics are complementary. To bring the discussion to life and to keep it realistic, we need a number of accounts of individual experiences and a body of individual opinion. In short, we would like some professional autobiographies. Why and how did you become a college teacher of English? What was your preparation? What special attributes have proved useful or a handicap? How did you get your first jobs? What advice and assistance and supervision did you receive in your early years of teaching? What factors have influenced your progress in the profession? How does your experience

compare with that of others you know? How have your ideas and professional attitudes changed? (Perhaps writing such a professional autobiography would put us in rapport with our students whom we ask to do autobiographical papers!)

In addition to accounts of individual experiences the Study needs descriptions of particularly successful (or, perhaps, unsuccessful) departmental organization. It will need more detail than a questionnaire could possibly produce, and side lights to illuminate the matter-of-fact descriptions. How is the executive work of your department, or a department you know of, handled? How are the large courses supervised? Promotions arranged? Personal rivalries or antipathies smoothed out and morale maintained? We should have analyses by heads of departments and also by department members.

And always in addition to accounts of what has been done there are our convictions and ideals of what might be.

Perhaps some of the ideas could be brought out in the form of comments on or additions to articles that have been in recent numbers of *College English* or other publications, or to such a presentation as chapter iv ("Personnel in the Humanities") of Fred B. Millett's *The Rebirth of the Humanities*.

This may seem to be asking for unwarranted confidences, but that is not the intention. Your expressions may be given in confidence, to serve as background for the Study; only with special permission will direct use be made of them.

Please send whatever you wish to contribute to Porter G. Perrin, Colgate University, Hamilton, New York, College-level assistant director of the Curriculum Study.

N.C.T.E. College Section Election

UNDER amendments made last November to the constitution of N.C.T.E., each section (elementary, high school, and college) elects each year two members of its own six-member Section (steering) Committee and two members of the Board of Directors of N.C.T.E. To put this plan into effect, the College Section must elect this year two members of its Section Committee and six directors.

Nominations are made by an elected Nominating Committee. The College Section Nominating Committee this year consists of Warner Rice, Michigan, chairman; Margaret M. Bryant, Brooklyn; and Hardin Craig, North Carolina.

Additional nominations may be made by petitions signed by fifteen (15) members of the Section and filed with the secretary of N.C.T.E., 211 West Sixty-eighth Street, Chicago 21, not later than April 1. The ballots for this election will be sent out in May. The names offered by the College Section Nominating Committee are printed here for advance consideration.

I. Steering Committee, College Section (Two to be elected)

1. RUDOLPH KIRK, Rutgers University
2. THOMAS C. POLLOCK, School of Education, New York University
3. ELIZABETH SCHNEIDER, Temple University
4. WILLIAM L. WERNER, Pennsylvania State College

II. Board of Directors, N.C.T.E.

A. For the one-year term (Two to be elected)

1. JAMES F. FULLINGTON, Ohio State University
2. GEORGE B. PARKS, Queens College
3. FLOYD STOVALL, Texas State College
4. RUTH WALLERSTEIN, University of Wisconsin

B. For the two-year term (Two to be elected)

1. MARGARET BEEDE, University of North Dakota
2. WINFIELD ROGERS, Woman's College, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, North Carolina
3. JAMES E. TOBIN, Keating Hall, Fordham University
4. FREDERICK R. WHITE, Knox College

C. For the three-year term (Two to be elected)

1. WALLACE BROWN, University of Kansas City
2. ELIZABETH MANWARING, Wellesley College
3. GERALD SANDERS, Michigan State Normal College, Ypsilanti
4. PHILIP W. SOUERS, Newcomb College, Tulane University

Round Table

THE TECHNIQUE OF THE ROUND TABLE IN COLLEGE COMPOSITION

During these critical war years the town-hall debate and the radio round-table discussion have become increasingly popular expressions of our American faith in the free exchange of ideas. We believe that students of freshman composition, who are usually aware of these developments, should be encouraged to articulate both orally and in writing as responsible citizens of a democratic society. In order to meet recent military directives which call for some practice in oral communication, we at the University of Wisconsin have experimented over several semesters with the round table as an integral part of the regular Army Specialized Training classes in English. Our results with several hundred A.S.T.R. trainees have been sufficiently happy to warrant our considering the technique suitable for established civilian courses in college composition.

The immediate aim of our round tables has been to remind future soldiers, who may possibly serve as commissioned or noncommissioned officers in the United States Army, of the military necessity for intelligible communication to large groups. But our broader purpose has been to illustrate the relevancy of the round-table technique to general public discussion. Since the aims have thus been strictly utilitarian, we have sought to emphasize clarity and precision of speech rather than the subtler arts of rhetoric and oratory, just as in written work we have stressed directness of style and cogency of logic rather than more obviously belletristic values. While we have not attempted to correct pathological speech defects, we have attacked fundamental errors in oral English with the same care expended upon structural faults in theme assignments.

The subject matter of our round tables

has arisen directly from previous discussion of expository readings. We have deliberately selected essays for class analysis to illustrate various approaches to a common provocative problem related to the student's range of interest and experience. One successful reading unit, for instance, concerns the place of science or art in an educational program; another examines changes affecting the American farm; a third presents the problems confronting modern industry. After a thoroughly objective consideration of such subjects extending over five or six class periods, the students are sufficiently familiar with the material to reach their own conclusions in round-table debate. Meanwhile all writing assignments have been based upon topics suggested by the essays. In this way we are able to achieve for a given unit a complete correlation of reading, writing, and speaking; and we may follow a similar pattern as each new unit is approached.

The first step in the organization of the round table itself is the division of the class into two groups, about one week in advance of the event: a participating panel of nine or ten students and the rest of the class who constitute a critical audience. Time permitting, the groups may be reversed at a following period so that each student may make an active contribution. From the panel a chairman, or moderator, is selected to serve as director of the discussion, to introduce the subject, to provide transition links between the speeches and, finally, to summarize the results of the debate. Although the moderator is not to dictate in any way the attitudes of the individual speakers, it is his task to limit each member of the panel to a three-minute discussion and to conclude his own remarks at least fifteen minutes before the end of the class period. The remaining quarter-hour is devoted to questions and comments from the floor and to a general criticism by members of the

audience or by the instructor, who throughout the entire proceeding has remained a passive observer.

The round table as a whole is conducted with appropriate informality; that is to say, the individual talks are neither pretentious nor rhetorical. While the speeches are delivered extemporaneously, the student is expected to have carefully outlined the order of his discourse. We recommend a straightforward presentation of argument, in which the student relies upon plain English and lucid logic, carefully marshals his facts, and succinctly draws his conclusions. While he may employ simple persuasive devices, his platform manner should be relaxed rather than elocutionary; he should seek to convince less by dramatic gesture than by forceful statement of his convictions.

If the reaction of A.S.T.R. students at Wisconsin to the round-table technique is at all typical, we feel sure that such organized debate, rooted in a given unit of interesting reading matter, would win the approval of any representative freshman composition group. We have been gratified to learn that the discussions have continued beyond the classroom, that the students have been eager to organize coherent reviews of various reading units, that they have found in the round table a stimulus to the writing of livelier themes, and that broader humanistic vistas have been opened

to those who are about to specialize in the natural sciences. In general, both instructors and students have found the round table an effective means of unifying the subject matter of introductory composition courses and of provoking the active thought essential to vigorous communication.

The round table, we believe, is probably the most effective means of familiarizing students on the freshman level with the conduct of public discussion. It makes for an increase in ease of delivery, a general loss of self-consciousness, and a rapid development of ability at extemporaneous refutation. Furthermore, it seems a natural method of introducing the student to basic reference works which may assist him in the preparation of his speeches and themes; and it supplies an incitement to independent reading on a specific problem. The round table is, of course, a valuable instrument for the detection of basic speech errors, since it provides ample opportunity for unobtrusive criticism. Yet it also affords the instructor a unique insight into the active thought-processes of his students. What is more, it reveals to him many of the facts concerning personalities, tastes, and backgrounds that are essential to a sympathetic understanding of his class.

JEROME H. BUCKLEY
PAUL L. WILEY

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

AFTER SCHOOL

LOUIS GINSBERG

*After the sudden Autumn rain has showed
The yellow leaves, till all the walks are
lit,
The youths in sunlight find that they are
dowered
To dazzle girls with Roman-candle wit.
And so, along the street, when school is
out,
A spreading laughter honeycombs the air.*

*Invasions of the boys in pell-mell rout
Imperil autos, which go tilting there.
Goldenrod-faces blossom in the street,
Where high-school girls, who semaphore
with glances,
In their deliberate accidents, now meet
Their boys to hatch their plots and Friday
dances.
Yet, over all the merriment, there runs
The malediction of the far-off guns!*

Summary and Report

"INTERIM," A NEW AND APPARENTLY the only literary magazine published in the Pacific Northwest, has appeared and has lived through three quarterly issues. It is edited by Wil and Elizabeth Stevens and is published in Seattle. In his editorial to the first issue, Mr. Stevens, who is a teaching fellow in English at the University of Washington, writes: "We have purposely refused to embrace any specific coterie of artists, because we believe policy in literature makes for isolation and possibly smugness in art. We wish *Interim* to express aesthetic expansion—not aesthetic privilege." At least one writer outside the Northwest is to be presented in each issue. Henry Miller contributes to the first, James Franklin Lewis of the University of Kansas City to the second, and Haldeen Braddy of the University of Kansas to the third.

THE FEBRUARY *BULLETIN* OF THE American Library Association presents its annual analysis of national reading trends. The average American in 1944 wanted to read about his own personal problems first and about the war and the state of the world second, it seems. The general interest in religion and human relations has not slackened, but the past year saw a sudden, nation-wide drop in technical reading. Library circulations, which dropped steadily in 1943, last year started to pick up again. The general public appears to be only superficially interested in postwar planning.

A NONPROFIT BOOK CLUB, TO BE known as the Labor Book Club, Inc., has been organized by the Automobile Workers of America, C.I.O. The club has been incorporated in Michigan by the U.A.W. and is operated by its Education Department. Reynal and Hitchcock have been retained as consultants. The selection and distribu-

tion of the books will be responsibilities of the International Union, which will select titles from the lists of all publishers. Six books, ranging from popular novels to works on national and international affairs, will be selected annually.

FIRST NORTH AMERICAN TO TEACH American literature in a South American university is Dr. Leo Rockwell, on leave from Colgate University, where he is head of the school of languages, who will become visiting professor of American literature March 1 at the National University of Chile, Santiago. He will work there under the auspices of the Department of State. Dr. and Mrs. Rockwell have directed the work of the University of Michigan's English House since its inauguration as an annual summer-school project in 1941.

THE CZECHOSLOVAK STATE PRIZE for Literature for 1944 has been awarded to Professor S. Harrison Thomson of the University of Colorado for his book, *Czechoslovakia in European History*.

THE *NEW YORK TIMES*, IN AN interview with Brigadier General Carlos P. Romulo (February 11), reports him as saying: "Five days after the landing [on Leyte] we reopened the schools. I had been named Commissioner of Education and I had feared that we could not open the schools for a long time because I knew that the Japanese had given orders that all American textbooks be burned, that they had burned all that they had found. But on Leyte I was told: 'Don't worry about textbooks. We have them.' And they had them for they had buried them in the ground. Not as a group but as individuals. Now they dug up their textbooks and though the covers were moldy the print was clear enough."

THIRTY-SIX CURRENT BOOKS COMPOSE the third Reading for Democracy book list to be put out by the Chicago Round Table of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Dr. Arthur H. Compton, Nobel Prize winner, Protestant co-chairman of the National Conference, writes in the Foreword: "The books here listed are chosen because of their value in stimulating the thoughts and in shaping the attitudes of those who would take their part in a free society." The list includes:

Under "Nonfiction": *The American Character*, by D. W. Brogan; *Frontiers of American Culture*, by James Truslow Adams; *State of the Nation*, by John Dos Passos; *Journey through Chaos*, by Agnes E. Meyer; *The Faith and Fire within Us*, by Elizabeth Jackson; *The Battle against Isolation*, by Walter Johnson; *The Time for Decision*, by Sumner Welles; *New Perspectives on Peace*, edited by George B. de Huszar; *The Peace We Americans Need*, by Edmund Jacobson; *How New Will the Better World Be?* by Carl Becker; *They Shall Not Sleep*, by Leland Stowe; *Must Men Hate?* by Sigmund Livingston; *Probing Our Prejudices*, by Hortense Powdermaker; *Your School, Your Chil-*

dren, by Marie Syrkin; *ABC's of Scapegoating*, by the Harvard University Study; *Antisemitism* by Hugo Valentin; *Chronicle of an American Crusader*, by Rabbi Samuel S. Mayerberg; *Questions and Answers concerning the Jews*, by the Anti-defamation League; *An American Dilemma and Digest of "An American Dilemma,"* by Gunnar Myrdal; *What the Negro Wants*, edited by Rayford W. Logan; and *13 against the Odds*, by Edwin R. Embree.

Under "The War and After": *Brave Men*, by Ernie Pyle; *Story of a Secret State*, by Jan Karski; *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, by Dixon Wecter; and *The Veteran Comes Back*, by Willard Waller.

Under "Fiction": *Earth and High Heaven*, by Gwethalyn Graham; *Freedom Road*, by Howard Fast; *Deep River*, by Henrietta Buckmaster; *Some of My Best Friends Are Soldiers*, by Margaret Halsey; and *Furlough*, by Franz Hoellerling.

Under "Verse, Anthology, and Picture Books": *V-Letter and Other Poems*, by Karl Shapiro; *My Country*, by Russell W. Davenport; *A Treasury of American Folklore*, edited by B. A. Botkin; *Woodrow Wilson*, text by Gerald W. Johnson; and *The Valley and Its People*, text by R. L. Duffus.

Books

SHAKESPEARE AND THE ACTORS¹

This is Professor Arthur Colby Sprague's third book about the theater. Like its predecessors, *Beaumont and Fletcher on the Restoration Stage* and *Shakespeare and the Audience*, it is the product of thoughtful, exacting research and is characterized by lucidity, a felicitous lack of pedantry, and by the obvious pleasure of the author in his findings. The first two books are particularly valuable to persons interested in the specialized field of stage history. It seems to me, however, that this new volume might well have a more general usefulness and be helpful to all teachers and students of Shakespeare's plays, whether in high school or in college.

Shakespeare and the Actors is concerned with the stage business of the plays, that is, with "things seen, rather than heard," with "what the actors do on the boards when a play is performed." Naturally, not all the stage business in all the plays could be discussed. Professor Sprague therefore includes only those pieces of business which were practiced between the years 1660 and 1905 and, of these, only such as "possessed artistic merit in themselves, served to illustrate or enforce the meaning of the lines, were early in time, or had a place in the acting tradition of the play." The great tragedies, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth*, have a chapter apiece. The other tragedies, each treated separately, comprise another chapter, as do the comedies and stage histories. This arrangement makes it possible to follow through the most interesting business of each play as a whole, in greater or less detail depending upon the play.

If what Professor E. A. Cross suggested at the final session of the Columbus meeting

¹ Arthur Colby Sprague, *Shakespeare and the Actors*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1944. Pp. xxv+440. \$5.00.

be true—that we are losing much of the emotional appeal of literature by limiting ourselves to silent reading—there is no better place to start reviving the art of reading aloud than in the Shakespeare class. For the plays of Shakespeare are likely to remain dead literature unless they are studied as words *spoken* and *accompanied by action*. Such treatment is especially important in areas where students are unable to attend the legitimate theater—and there are many such. It is in this process of dramatic visualization in the classroom that Professor Sprague's book, with deft use, could become an entertaining and stimulative teaching aid.

For example, what high-school boy would not take a brisker interest in *As You Like It* if the wrestling scene were read aloud and discussed in terms of how it might be managed on the stage and of the ways in which different actors have wrestled it out? What girl would not be more interested in *Romeo and Juliet* if the scene of Juliet's coming-out party were read aloud and the problem of just how the lovers should execute their first kiss were discussed? These were real stage problems to Shakespeare. They are real stage problems today. The plays cannot be fully savored without some comprehension of them. Professor Sprague relates several neat ways in which these two have been handled, and the whole book is a fabric of similar problems and the players' solutions.

That the merits of this work are attracting more readers than is usually the case with books of this nature is evident, for, to the astonishment of both its author and its publisher, within six months of its first appearance, it has already gone into a second edition.

LA TOURETTE STOCKWELL

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

SATIRE IN SHAKESPEARE

Even if one does not agree with this book¹ at all points, it is a very informative and stimulating introduction to an important aspect of Shakespeare's work. Probably nowhere has the all too frequent tendency to view Shakespeare as a unique genius free of the liens of his time and marvelously anticipatory of the preoccupations of ours been more stultifying than in the field of his comedy. For the very nature of comedy is social and contemporary. One may grieve about the world alone, but to laugh one must have congenial company. And while one may sympathize with half-comprehended grief, no one laughs wholeheartedly at a jest he does not understand. Mr. Campbell performs a very valuable service to us, then, when he shows us so persuasively the relations between Shakespeare's comedy and the satire of his time.

To begin with, he shows us Shakespeare as very much less disengaged and intellectually footloose in his fooling than some of his admirers have made out. To take the simplest and most obvious example, it is interesting to note that when Kemp was playing the leading comic roles in Shakespeare's company, Shakespeare made rich use of many of the tricks known to be dear to Kemp, while when Armin took his place, there is abundant evidence of attention to the interests and talents of the new comedian in Shakespeare's comic creations of that period. And through the individuals one reaches back to the stage traditions which inspired these two great comedians, the Vice for Kemp, the Clown for Armin.

Illuminating, too, is the way in which Professor Campbell brings Shakespeare's comic characters into relation with satiric developments of the time, the satire against fustian in the Bastard in *King John*, and euphuism in Falstaff, and the malcontent traveler in Jaques. And the influence of Ben Jonson's satire, especially of the humor

character, on Shakespeare's mature comedy is richly documented. Indeed, Professor Campbell offers Shakespeare's increasing preoccupation with satire as a key to the problem of the so-called "dark comedies": "Each one of these plays had been constructed on a satiric model and subjected to a strong infusion of the satiric spirit" (p. 92). His analysis of these plays in the light of this thesis is very interesting and, I think, valuable. Particularly is it suggestive for *Timon of Athens* and *Troilus and Cressida*. Both of these plays make better sense on Professor Campbell's assumptions than on any others. Especially helpful is the analysis of *Timon of Athens* as a tragical satire.

But I am not so sure about *Measure for Measure*. While I think Mr. Campbell's suggestion that "the semi-tragic action of the play is devised . . . not so much to test Angelo's undisciplined virtue as to expose the folly of his confident self-righteousness" (p. 132) is a very interesting one, I do not think that it accounts for the effect of the play as a whole. Nor does Professor Campbell, for that matter, since he admits that the satiric structure is obscure, and he attributes this obscurity to the fact that Isabella "completely outgrew" her intended role, that of "laying bare the hypocrisy of Angelo" (p. 125). Suggestive as Professor Campbell's thesis is, it raises almost as many difficulties as it solves.

And still more is this true of *Coriolanus*. Shakespeare is critical of both the crowd and of Coriolanus, but, while he may be said at certain points to treat the crowd "derisively," I am not at all sure that that is ever the word for his treatment of Coriolanus (p. 204). And I feel quite sure that Shakespeare would be surprised to hear Coriolanus' attitude toward his mother described as "completely infantile" (p. 211). For that is to disregard the representative character of Volumnia's attitude. In other words, here the author would seem to have driven his thesis pretty far. But he has certainly called attention to elements in Shakespeare's comedy that have not been sufficiently reckoned with, and he has added

¹ Oscar James Campbell, *Shakespeare's Satire*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1944. \$3.75.

convincing evidence to what we already have as to Shakespeare's responsiveness to the currents of thought of his age.

HELEN C. WHITE

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

THE SHAPE OF BOOKS TO COME

With an increasing emphasis on the teaching of American literature in our schools and colleges, it becomes important to define the critical philosophy by which we should judge contemporary writers. The task is never easy, because the nearness of the material makes perspective hard to establish.

The conventional view of modern American writers is that those who are not depressing are unimportant. That this view is completely erroneous does not seem to matter. We pull a long face and read about the degenerates in Steinbeck's *Cannery Row* without realizing that we are supposed to chuckle; because it is sordid, it must be great. We greet *Forever Amber* as relatively important because it spends some six hundred pages of shoddy writing on a group of low and dissolute people in high places. We treasure Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* as a classic because it invokes a noble theme from a long-dead poet and deals "realistically" with a modern civil war. These are bad judgments that mix the great with the shoddy because they are based on a false assumption. The sordid is not necessarily the real, and the real is not necessarily the great.

Mr. Adams lays the foundation for his study of twentieth-century literature¹ on a contrary assumption. He turns for authority to those writers "who did not flinch from the observation and recording of human folly, stupidity, and viciousness, but who could still hold to a belief in the indestructible dignity of the human spirit, in the resolution and hope by which it has endured." In Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* he sees the culmination of a literary move-

ment based on a biochemical view of life and preaching a fundamentally false theory of inevitability; and in John Hersey's *A Bell for Adano* he finds that "flash of illumination" and that "current of human sympathy and understanding" which are essential to great writing. With these poles of reference, he ranges Robert Frost, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Ellen Glasgow, and Willa Cather on the side of the angels; the early Hemingway, Thomas Wolfe, and William Faulkner on the contrary side. For Sinclair Lewis, Scott Fitzgerald, the later Hemingway, John Steinbeck, H. L. Davis, and many others he finds a middle ground. Furthermore, he attempts to prove that American literature is moving away from the sordid and despairing philosophy of the early years of the century and that "the shape of books to come" will be determined by a renewed faith in human nature.

It would be pleasant to accept this thesis *in toto* as does Van Wyck Brook's *Oliver Allston*, Howard Mumford Jones in some of his moods, and an increasing body of contemporary critics. The great literature of the past would seem to validate it in principle. But Mr. Adams, like many another, falls into a critical error which distorts many of his judgments and leads to overenthusiasm for much that is merely sentimental and shallow. He asks not only that a writer have a deep concern for human values but that he preach a gospel of sweetness and light. He does not recognize, as does Amos Wilder in his more profound book on a similar topic, *The Spiritual Aspects of Modern Poetry* (1940), that much of the literature of confidence "is wholesome but is not whole" and that such earnest seekers as Wolfe, Jeffers, Eliot, and even Faulkner are "wrestling with ethical issues and value issues" as sincerely as were Shakespeare in his tragic period or Voltaire in *Candide*.

The judgment of the future may well hold that the great writers of this period through which we are living are those who in their despair have rediscovered man's basic needs rather than those who have cheerfully re-expressed his faith. The sordid and realistic

¹ J. Donald Adams, *The Shape of Books To Come*. New York: Viking Press, 1944. Pp. xvii + 202. \$2.50.

writers fall easily into two groups: those who are profoundly moved by the tragic plight or the comic necessities of human nature in the modern world and those who are merely sensationalists. Dreiser, Wolfe, Jeffers, Steinbeck, and some of Hemingway fall into the first; some of Hemingway, Cain, some of Faulkner, and some of Caldwell fall into the second. The old assumption that the real is sordid and the sordid is great must go; but our writers must find a morality which rests on something more profound than Major Joppolo's naïve faith if we are to rediscover an ethical standard for literary judgment. Mr. Adams serves as a useful corrective for the false and shallow critical standards of some of his opponents, but his own position is equally warped by ethical standards which are too shallow and too formalized.

ROBERT E. SPILLER

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

A RESPECTED TEXT REVISED¹

Many textbooks have been written in the field of public speaking. Some of them are excellent. Among these superior few, John Dolman's *Handbook of Public Speaking* has occupied a secure place ever since its first publication in 1922.

Modestly, the author lays no claim to originality. The principles and concepts he presents come down time-tested through centuries of human preoccupation with techniques of communication. It is doubtful, however, if the facts have ever been expounded in a manner more likely to engage the interest and clarify the thinking of inexperienced public speakers. For Dolman understands the undergraduate mind—its "blind spots," its characteristic reactions, its frustrations. Accordingly, he is able to anticipate the predicament of students who complain of having nothing to talk about, who wonder why their jokes fall flat, who suffer agonies of defeat when words fail

them in audience situations. His advice to such is helpful and sound. The chapter on motivation, for example, deals—practically, clearly, and briefly—with one of the most troublesome problems in the field.

The chief difference distinguishing this latest revision from the one that appeared ten years ago is the added eleven-page chapter on impromptu speaking. Like the rest of the book, it is engaging and specific. The rarity of good impromptu speeches is admitted, and the student is comforted with the assurance that "the best one can ordinarily hope for in an impromptu situation is a speech that is half good and half bad." The person confronted with the horrifying necessity of giving a spur-of-the-moment talk is warned in particular against two common mistakes. First, he is urged to make the most of those first vague and unpromising ideas that rise in his groping mind, instead of rejecting them in the hope of conjuring up something more satisfactory. Second, he is advised to expend the few seconds available to him for preparation in planning the ending rather than the opening of his speech. These instructions are not new, but the author points them up with fresh illustrations.

Brevity characterizes the book. Those who like pages of examples and detailed assignments will not choose the *Handbook* for a class text—though it is to be hoped that they will read parts of it aloud to their students, for it reads well and sets forth its points in a telling and often entertaining way. Those who attach great importance to formal outlining or to parliamentary procedure will think these subjects too sketchily treated. But those who desire a textbook to clarify basic techniques concisely, to stimulate and reassure the inexperienced student, and to provide a body of common knowledge around which to organize supplementary reading will find themselves well served by *A Handbook of Public Speaking*.

LAURENCE B. GOODRICH

¹ John Dolman, Jr., *A Handbook of Public Speaking*. 2d rev. ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1944. Pp. vii+174.

NEW YORK STATE TEACHERS
COLLEGE AT ONEONTA

In Brief Review

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

FOR THE GENERAL READER

Henry James: The Major Phase. By F. O. MATTHIESSEN. Oxford University Press, 1944. \$2.50.

A new critical study of the novelist by an author who had access to James's unpublished notebooks written between 1878 and 1914. Result: a fresh and very perceptive portrait.

Thirty Poems. By THOMAS MERTON. New Directions, 1944. \$0.50.

Thoughtful lyrics, both of the spirit and of the heart, by a Trappist monk in Our Lady of Gethsemane, Kentucky.

1000 and One: The Blue Book of Non-theatrical Films—Twentieth Annual Edition, 1944-45. Educational Screen (64 East Lake St., Chicago), 1945. \$1.00.

Classifies 6,214 films under 176 subject headings.

Current Abbreviations. By GEORGE EARLIE SHANKLE. Wilson, 1944. Pp. 207. \$3.00.

The process of linguistic leveling has reached such a point that in America we are now "in the midst of an era of abbreviations." This is probably the most complete guide to the maze yet to appear.

Tomorrow Will Sing. By ELLIOTT ARNOLD. Duell, Sloan. \$2.50.

By the author of *Commandos*, who had actual combat experience in North Africa and Italy. Lieutenant Eddie Amato, American-born Italian, Long Island truck farmer, expert bombardier, found an uncle on a large farm in southern Italy. Eddie's knowledge of the language and his sympathy for the peasants made them accept him as a friend. Eddie's cousin is a Fascist, and some of the other peasants have had Fascist sympathies and are now plainly bewildered. This is an excellent picture of an occupied country, of a people who have suffered under different rulers. They wish only to live simple useful lives as human beings.

The Troubled Midnight. By JOHN GUNTHER. Harper. \$2.50.

The background is Constantinople in the present war. Leslie Corcoran, an American Middle West girl already considerably experienced in love and a bit sophisticated, secures a position in Lend-Lease Administration and takes her place in the decadent society of the Turkish city. Many nations are represented, and there are people of all types, from the sly Gestapo agents to the unhappy Greek headwaiter, an American ambassador and British agents.

Several men fall in love with Leslie, who seems quite bewildered. There is much conversation, much night-club life, beautiful dancers. As a picture of insecurity of intrigue, of human depravity, of lack of integrity or moral scruples, it is a very disturbing book—the more disturbing because the author has seen the social group of which he writes.

The Thurber Carnival. By JAMES THURBER. Harper. \$2.75.

Included are six new stories, choice selections from earlier books, and the complete text of "My Life and Hard Times." Whether we choose to laugh at Thurber's loosely made meditative dogs in their innocence or chuckle at the men expressing varied emotions merely by the angle at which they hold the newspaper or tilt their heads, we feel jolly just to rustle Thurber leaves. Of his prose, he himself says: "He seems to have started at the beginning and to have reached the end by way of the middle." Better than that, you can start *any place* and take his conclusions of draw your own. Subtle is the word for Thurber.

Road to the Ocean. By LEONID LEONOV. Fischer. \$3.00.

This very long novel written in the tradition of the older Russian literature is the story of a newly awakened people struggling against an old order and fighting also inner personal conflicts. The story centers about a Soviet engineer, manager of a badly equipped railroad, with undisciplined employees, surrounded by frustrated or ignorant individuals, fighting for his own dream of perfection and a road, both real and ideal, to the ocean of his dreams. With many characters, the novel is dramatic, chaotic, and idealistic—true Russian style but a Russia striving toward a new order.

The Path of the Great. By STEPHEN GARGILIS. Athena. \$2.75.

The true story of Erotokritos: an adaptation of the epic poem. Erotokritos a commoner, is an idol of the court and beloved by the king and the Grecian people. But he falls in love with the princess, and, to win her, he treads the "Path of the Great." The author has not attempted to translate the poem but has endeavored to interpret its meaning and spirit, drawing a parallel with the present conflict in Greece and in the world. He pictures the people of Greece again fighting to preserve civilization as they did in the days described by the epic poem *Erotokritos*.

Great Son. By EDNA FERBER. Doubleday. \$2.50.

Four generations of the pioneer and now financially powerful Melendy family live in beautiful Seattle.

Of the Melendy men, Miss Ferber admires only the dashing young Mike. The Melendy women she just doesn't like, nor the Seattle girls who are fascinated by Mike. But she does admire young refugee Regina, who, we can see from the beginning, is to marry Mike. The robber barons have been dealt with more justly before; tolerance of youth is handled with dignity and force in *Earth and High Heaven*.

Coaching Roads of Old New England. By GEORGE FRANCIS MARLOWE. Macmillan. \$3.50.

A slight volume, with drawings by the author, who takes us over the old roads, with glimpses of towns and inns and their keepers, reviews old legends, and retells jokes cracked at the bars in historic taverns on cold evenings after a day spent in difficult coaching.

The Headmistress. By ANGELA THIRKELL. Knopf. \$2.50.

The headmistress and her school have been removed from bombed London to a safer spot in the country. They are established in a country house which the Beltons are forced to let because the family fortunes are on the wane. The Beltons move to a smaller house in the village, and village life, while their sons and daughter in their country's service come and go, keeps them busy. Sympathetic, clever, ironic, amusing. Mr. Carton's proposal is worth a book.

The Missouri. By STANLEY VESTAL. Farrar. \$2.50.

The latest volume in the "Rivers of America" series. The author has stressed the importance of the Missouri as a highway and "Father of Navigation" in the opening-up of the West. There are chapters on legends, Mormon immigration, fur-traders, Indian wars, the buffalo and its extinction, old village sites, frontier heroes and bad men. Illustrations and pictorial end maps by Getlar Smith.

Brazilian Literature: An Outline. By ERICO VERISSIMO. Macmillan. \$2.00.

The author gives a description of Brazil and its racial mixture. He includes a sketchy history of Brazilian literature because the best key to the soul of a country is the work of its writers. Brazilians are crazy about words, colors, images. His discussion of literature opens with the seventeenth century. In his concluding paragraph he says that in the last ten years Brazilian writers have ceased to be snobbish imitators of European literary fashions and have joined the crusade for a better world.

Democracy under Pressure: Special Interests vs. Public Welfare. By STUART CHASE. Twentieth Century Fund. \$1.00.

Fourth in this series. "Will post-war Main Street be the victim of a dangerous and bitter battle between warring pressure groups?" A challenging book.

Two Solitudes. By HUGH MACLENNAN. Duell, Sloan. \$3.00.

A story based upon the hostility between the French and the English in Canada, made more dangerous by difference in religious views. The time is 1917-39. The book would be even more important if it covered the last six years. However, the situation, though now aggravated, remains much the same. Good.

The Vigil of a Nation. By LIN YUTANG. John Day. \$2.75.

The author has recently spent six months in his homeland and again endeavors to picture the many-faceted life of the Chinese people. He is confident of victory and of a democratic future for China.

Re-educating Germany. By WERNER RICHTER. University of Chicago Press. \$3.50.

The author was undersecretary in the Prussian Ministry of Education during the Weimar Republic and is now teaching at Elmhurst College. His views should be of utmost importance in postwar planning for the youth of Germany. Of particular importance are his recommendation for campus-life activities to crowd out the old youth organizations. The author believes that the military ideal *can* be replaced by higher ideals.

Latin America in the Future World. By GEORGE SOULE and DAVID EFRON. Farrar. \$3.50.

Written under the direction of the National Planning Association. Critical of many things that have happened and very conscious of the part South America may have in the years to come.

Tomorrow's Business. By BEARDSLEY RUMI. Farrar. \$2.50.

A shrewd business analyst plans a drastic program with many radical changes. Among them are the abolishment of corporation income taxes and the adoption of many more government regulations and more federal control.

Latin America in the Future World. By GEORGE SOULE, DAVID EFRON, and NORMAN T. NESS. Farrar. Pp. 272. \$3.50.

This study, made under the direction of Alvin H. Hansen for the National Planning Association, has made use of research by the authors and a staff and has also had the benefit of extensive informal discussion with representatives of the Latin-American nations, both official and unofficial, and United States government officials likely to be concerned with post-war problems. There is reason to believe the data authentic and the opinions as in general those of the people who know most about and have thought most about the topic. The point of view is that of the Atlantic Charter.

The Rebirth of Liberal Education. By FRED B. MILLETT. Harcourt. \$2.00.

Quite different in matter and manner from other recent volumes on this much-discussed topic. Here we have a report of an eight-month survey of colleges and universities where experimentation in the humanities was going on, including careful examination of practically all printed opinion about the problem. Much of the time, however, the book reads more as a discussion than as a report. Sometimes the expression is caustic. Millett would make the study of literature scholarly and critical but not pedantic; he would give more emphasis to ethical and aesthetic values than he thinks traditionalists do.

FOR THE TEACHER

Methods of Vocational Guidance. By GERTRUDE FORRESTER. Heath, 1944.

Written to assist teachers in vocational counseling. Devoted to specific methods of helping young people plan their lives. Contains special helps for the teacher of business subjects. Designed particularly for high-school teachers, but many of the suggestions could be made helpful to college freshmen.

Claremont Colleges Reading Conferences: Ninth Yearbook. Claremont Colleges Library, 1944.

Reports the conferences held in July, 1944, at Claremont Colleges. Divided into five parts, stressing different phases and problems of reading development: aural reading and visual reading; primary reading ("reading things" rather than "symbols of things"); discussions of the points of view from which the editorial staffs and writers of publishing companies approach the implementation of reading instruction; the reading of normal and superior children; and teaching bilingual children to read.

Education and Society. By MEMBERS OF THE FACULTIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA. University of California Press, 1944. \$2.50.

Published in commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the University of California. The thirteen essays which comprise the volume "are written with the aim of revealing the underlying considerations and methods of study which have influenced modern education and the chief characteristics of the system which these considerations and methods of study have brought

about." Those of particular interest to N.C.T.E. members are: "Laboratory Techniques and Children's Learning"; "High Schools Facing the Needs of Youth"; "The Public Junior College as a Community College"; and "Financing Public Education in a Democracy."

FOR THE STUDENT

The Practice of Teaching. By ALFRED KERN. Lynchburg, Va., 1944. \$2.50. (Lithographed.)

Intended for those who are studying to become teachers. May be used either as a textbook or as outside reading. Material derived from a series of class papers based upon the experiences of their writers as students in secondary schools and colleges, supplemented by suggestions and ideas drawn from the teaching experience and reading of the author, who is a member of the faculty of Randolph-Macon Woman's College.

Style Book in English. By RAYMOND W. PENCE. Odyssey Press, 1944. Pp. xiv+545. \$1.75.

A handbook for college students on the mechanics of writing based on the prevailing practice of today. Comprehensive. Practical.

English at Work: Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening. By PHIL S. GRANT, JUSTINE VAN GUNDY, and CAROLINE SHRODES. Macmillan, 1944. Pp. 365. \$1.80.

Workbook for a closely co-ordinated course in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, with stress on reading and analysis of content. Selections arranged in approximate order of difficulty and divided into three sections: "Reading for Comprehension," "Reading for Opinion," and "Reading for Implications."

How To Read Better and Faster. By NORMAN LEWIS. Crowell. Pp. 319. \$2.50.

A book of advice and exercises in comprehension and speed of reading apparently intended for adults who have become conscious of their reading deficiency. Few experts would approve all the advice and devices, but all would approve most of what Mr. Lewis offers. The book could be used with college students or with high-school juniors and seniors whom the teacher did not have time to supervise.

BOOK NEWS

HANDBOOK OF BASIC ENGLISH

By TOM BURNS HABER

DESIGNED mainly for first and second year college students, this is a simple and logical introduction to Basic English with the emphasis on mechanics. The limited vocabulary of 850 words representing "key meanings," is fully explained and clarified by visual aids, and the complete Basic English vocabulary is included as an end-paper. Practice through composition work and exercises skilfully keyed to the text discussion give the student a working knowledge of the language. Basic English is valuable not only as an international language, but also as a tool for enforcing and clarifying style, through the necessary evaluation of individual words. *Just published.*

THE PRACTICE OF ENGLISH FUNDAMENTALS

By JOSEPH M. BACHELOR and HAROLD L. HALEY

THIS book combines a minimum of theory with an abundance of rigorous exercises which drive home the knowledge and habits of correct writing. The fundamentals of English are organized under the sentence, grammar, spelling, and punctuation, and each unit is followed by diagnostic tests for determining student progress. The book is notable for its down-to-earth treatment of fundamentals, and its logical organization of topics. *Just published.*

FOREWORD TO LITERATURE

By ERNEST EARNEST

HERE is a handbook for introductory college courses in literature which surveys compactly the various approaches to the appreciation of literature with an aim toward developing taste and discrimination in the student reader. The discussion covers the nature and development of the literary forms, the critical theories of schools and periods, certain literary attitudes such as sincerity and restraint, and the varieties of humor. The text is accompanied by an abundance of illustrative quotations, and exercises keyed to readings frequently used in college courses in literature. *Just published.*

D. APPLETON-CENTURY COMPANY
35 West 32nd Street New York 1, New York

A HANDBOOK OF ENGLISH

By Charles W. Roberts, *University of Illinois*

Jesse W. Harris, *Southern Illinois Normal University*

and Walter G. Johnson, *University of Illinois*

This new composition text combines the grammar review and the workbook in one compact volume. Professors who have examined it are enthusiastic about its convenient arrangement in page-long units, each with an exercise following. The authors have successfully avoided the difficulty of having to deal in terms not already treated, and the book progresses logically from the parts of speech through the preparation of the research paper. If you have not seen a copy, write for one today.

304 pages

5×7½

\$1.35

Continuing in Popularity

PRACTICAL WORD STUDY

By W. Powell Jones, *Western Reserve University*

This vocabulary workbook provides a thorough study of the meanings of words through understanding their origin. Twenty exercises, divided into five sections: on the use of dictionaries, prefixes and suffixes, Latin and Greek roots, changes in meaning, word pairs. With an optional section on technical vocabularies.

100 tear-out pages

8½×11

\$1.00

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS • 114 Fifth Avenue • New York 11, N.Y.



"Education is the function of projecting the character, the ideas, the needs, and, in general, the social consciousness of the nation into the next generation."

JULIAN HUXLEY, *On Living in a Revolution*

AMERICA in LITERATURE

(TREMAINE McDOWELL)

gives a lively, revealing portrait of America—its ideals, experiences and characteristics which together make up the pattern of American life.

If you are among the many teachers planning to give their students this approach to American life and civilization, you will find in AMERICA IN LITERATURE a rich collection of stories, poems, essays and plays providing the essential readings for such a program.

These readings may be organized in a variety of ways, to fit local interests and local needs. For example, one representative program carries these three divisions: I. Nationalism, Regionalism, Internationalism. II. Individualism *vs.* Democracy. III. The Pursuit of Happiness (Humor, The Fine Arts, The Good Life.)

This approach to American ideas and civilization is being introduced as an integral part of freshman English courses and also as a separate project in general education, on both the freshman and sophomore levels.

"Professor McDowell has succeeded in capturing, through his admirable selections and his pointed and beautifully written comments, the diversity and the unity of America."

MERLE CURTI, *University of Wisconsin*

540 pages, octavo, \$2.00

F. S. CROFTS & CO. 101 Fifth Avenue, New York 3, N.Y.

Ready in late March

A completely revised edition of the popular text

A COMPLETE COURSE *in* FRESHMAN ENGLISH

BY HARRY SHAW

WITH THE EDITORIAL COOPERATION OF

PHILIP E. BURNHAM, *Harvard University*

A. J. BRYAN, *Louisiana State University*

WILLIAM H. HILDRETH, *Ohio State University*

Available just in time to permit careful examination before next year's Freshman texts are selected, the new *Complete Course* is certain to please the hundreds of teachers who adopted the first edition since its publication five years ago, and to win many new friends.

Reorganized in a number of important ways, and considerably expanded in both handbook and readings sections, the new text provides all the material necessary for a well-rounded year's course in Freshman English. As before, its fundamental aims are clear thinking, intelligent and creative reading, and correct, clear, and effective writing and rewriting.

More than half of the readings are new, and all are provided with biographical and critical notes and exercises. The most important addition here is the complete text of one of the most popular novels used in the freshman course, Rølvaag's *Giants in the Earth*—a novel never before available except in a separate volume.

Send for a detailed descriptive circular

Rhetoric Section, 226 pp.

Handbook Section, 136 pp.

Readings, 843 pp.

Price \$3.50

HARPER & BROTHERS

49 East 33d St., New York City 16

English Speech-Tones

Identified with Musical Tones and
Chinese Speech-Tones

by Jee Sane Woo

This is a long awaited work in the field of popular linguistics and music, and it represents Mr. Woo's diligent and painstaking investigations of the respective phonologies of the Chinese and English languages, and of musicology in general.

The student of foreign languages will find here the explanation of *why* he or she can actually learn to talk in a foreign tongue. Once the student knows *why*, the *how* is most times automatic.

The student of music will find here the distinct importance of musical tones in the mastery of any language. The author indicates clearly that in any language the *sounds* of words are the first things to be learned. This is so important because few courses in language study emphasize it.

The musician and language enthusiast alike will welcome this provocative little book.

Price \$1.00 per copy

The

WILLIAM-FREDERICK PRESS
313 West 35th Street, New York 1, N.Y.

Stimulate students' independent reading

A book guide which lists titles, authors, and dollar editions of a thousand genuinely significant books is called

Good Reading

It is topically arranged and describes each book briefly.

20 cents

\$1.80 per dozen

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
TEACHERS OF ENGLISH**

211 West 68th Street

Chicago 21



The **DODD, MEAD** *Intercollegiate Literary Fellowship* 1945

The Dodd, Mead Intercollegiate Literary Fellowship was established to assist students in American Colleges and Universities who wish to become professional writers. The Fellowship makes it possible to take advantage of Faculty advice while writing a novel and to complete the book after graduation. Limited to college students, it offers a unique opportunity to the young writer free from competition of experienced professional writers. It is awarded on the basis of a project submitted in advance and does not necessarily require a completed manuscript.

All applications and projects must be sent to the publishers by April 1, 1945. The \$1200 award will be announced as soon after the first of June as possible.

For further details and application blanks write to DODD, MEAD & COMPANY, 432 Fourth Ave., New York City, 16.

Previous Award Winners

- 1941 **Seventeenth Summer** by Maureen Daly
of Rosary College \$2.50
1942 **A Hedge Against the Sun** by Barbara Bentley
of Pomona College \$2.50
1943 **The Narrowing Wind** by Catherine Lawrence
of Wellesley College \$2.50
1944 To be published next Fall

DODD, MEAD & COMPANY
NEW YORK

Macmillan Literature Books

Masters of English Literature

By PAUL S. WOOD "An excellent text. . . . A liberal meal from the works of twenty-two of the best writers. The editor has included introductions which place the authors in proper perspective and interchapters which bridge the gaps between greatness. . . . The explanatory parts are strictly done. Their style is easy and entertaining. . . . The choice of readings is refreshing."—*College English*. 2 vols. Each, \$3.25

Book of English Literature

By SNYDER & MARTIN "The painstaking work of specialists in textual accuracy, historical introductions, biographies, bibliographies, and explanatory notes. There are many effective drawings."—*College English*. Vol. I. From Beowulf to William Blake. 4th Ed., \$3.25. Vol. II. From Wordsworth to Spender. 4th Ed., \$3.50

Western World Literature

By ROBBINS & COLEMAN "Full and intelligent examples of good literature, from Greece to contemporary Russia, are given in this collection. The presentation is by literary periods, with subdivisions by country."—*Virginia Quarterly Review*. \$4.25

An Anthology of World Literature

By PHILO M. BUCK Includes the great masterpieces of literature of every age from Homer through the nineteenth century and from all civilizations except those of the Far East and of the English-speaking peoples. 2nd Ed., \$4.50

The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature

By GEORGE SAMPSON "*The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature* is magnificent. It combines the excellence of a manual with admirable literary criticism: and it is steadily readable."—*William Lyon Phelps*. \$3.40

The Macmillan Co., 60 Fifth Ave., New York 11

BOOKS FROM THE GINN LIST

CASKEY-HEIDLER-WRAY COLLEGE COMPOSITION

A first-year college textbook with concrete material designed to meet everyday needs of speaking and writing. Chapters I-IV show how any writer approaches his task. Chapters V-X discuss various kinds of writing. The appendix includes Common Forms of English Verse and a Handbook of English Usage.

COLLEGE COMPOSITION, BRIEF COURSE

Contains the first four chapters of the Complete Course and the Handbook.

BLODGETT AND JOHNSON READINGS FOR OUR TIMES

In *two volumes*. Fresh and notable selections, both past and present, all of contemporary significance, chosen because of their essential interest. Intended primarily as a background of general reading in both English and American literature for college courses in composition, usually given in the freshman year. Stimulating critical essays preface each section. Notes and teaching aids included.

SCHNEIDER AND SANFORD A COLLEGE BOOK OF PROSE

An anthology which makes available within one cover the best that is being said and thought and that has been said and thought on such timely subjects as war, propaganda, democracy, vocations, art, science, and philosophy of living. Brief biographical notes, student helps, and theme suggestions.

WHEAT—THE DEMOCRATIC TRADITION IN AMERICA

An informative and inspiring collection extending from Bradford's account of the Plymouth Plantation to Franklin Roosevelt's broadcasts. Here are authoritative writings by great Americans and influential thinkers which set forth the foundations of the American tradition. Twenty-five poems are an interpretation of events and ideas touched upon in the prose.

GINN AND COMPANY

BOSTON
DALLAS

NEW YORK
COLUMBUS

CHICAGO

ATLANTA
SAN FRANCISCO

To be published
in April

Cleanth Brooks
Robert Heilman

UNDERSTANDING DRAMA

To create an intelligent, critical appreciation of drama is the aim of this thought-provoking anthology. The authors discuss "the play" from both a literary and structural point of view, and seven complete plays, ranging from the simple morality to the modern complex drama, are analyzed to illustrate concretely the problems which the dramatist must consider. There are briefer analyses of several other plays, a short appendix treating the history of the drama, and an alphabetically-arranged glossary of critical terms. Excellent for freshman classes or for the brief drama course.

These plays are included in their entirety: *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Everyman*, Plautus' *The Twin Menaechmi*, Lillo's *The London Merchant*, Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*, Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part I*.

Approximately 600 pages

Probable price \$2.25

Brooks and Warren
UNDERSTANDING
POETRY
1938

680 pp. \$1.60

Short and Sewall
SHORT STORIES
FOR STUDY
1941

522 pp. \$1.40

~~~~~  
John Crowe Ransom  
A COLLEGE PRIMER  
OF WRITING  
1943

137 pp. \$1.10

~~~~~  
Boatright and Long
A MANUAL AND WORK-
BOOK IN ENGLISH
1943

256 pp. \$1.20

Henry Holt and Company • New York City 10

NOW ON THE HEATH LIST

We take pleasure in announcing that the following college English textbooks formerly published by Little, Brown and Company have been added to our list:

Foster: A WAY TO BETTER ENGLISH	\$2.00
Gerould: THE PATTERNS OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN FICTION	3.00
Morrison & Others: FIVE KINDS OF WRITING	2.50
Moses: REPRESENTATIVE BRITISH DRAMAS	3.50
Moses & Campbell: DRAMAS OF MODERNISM	3.50
Moses & Krutch: REPRESENTATIVE AMERICAN DRAMAS	3.75
Simpson, Brown & Stegner: AN EXPOSITION WORKSHOP	2.00
Smith: LEARNING TO WRITE IN COLLEGE (An Atlantic Monthly Press Book)	2.00
Spencer: ELIZABETHAN PLAYS	4.00

Orders for these books should be placed with our nearest office.

D. C. HEATH AND COMPANY

Boston

New York

Chicago

Atlanta

San Francisco

Dallas

London

Argumentation and Debate

Lionel Crocker

Professor of Speech, Denison University

American
Book
Company

◆ Designed for college courses covering the theory and practice of argumentation and debate, this text is admirably suited to fill the requirements of students in both everyday speaking and formal debate. The emphasis upon logical analysis, upon the necessity of welding each subordinate point to the main point, and upon sticking to the main point until the final and conclusive proof trains the student in reasoning power. Today's broadcasting station and platform supplied much of the material. 403 pages, \$2.50